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THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

GENERAL WASHINGTON.

BY

CYRUS R. EDMONDS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THOMAS TEGG AND SON,
73, CHEAPSIDE.
MDCCCXXXV.

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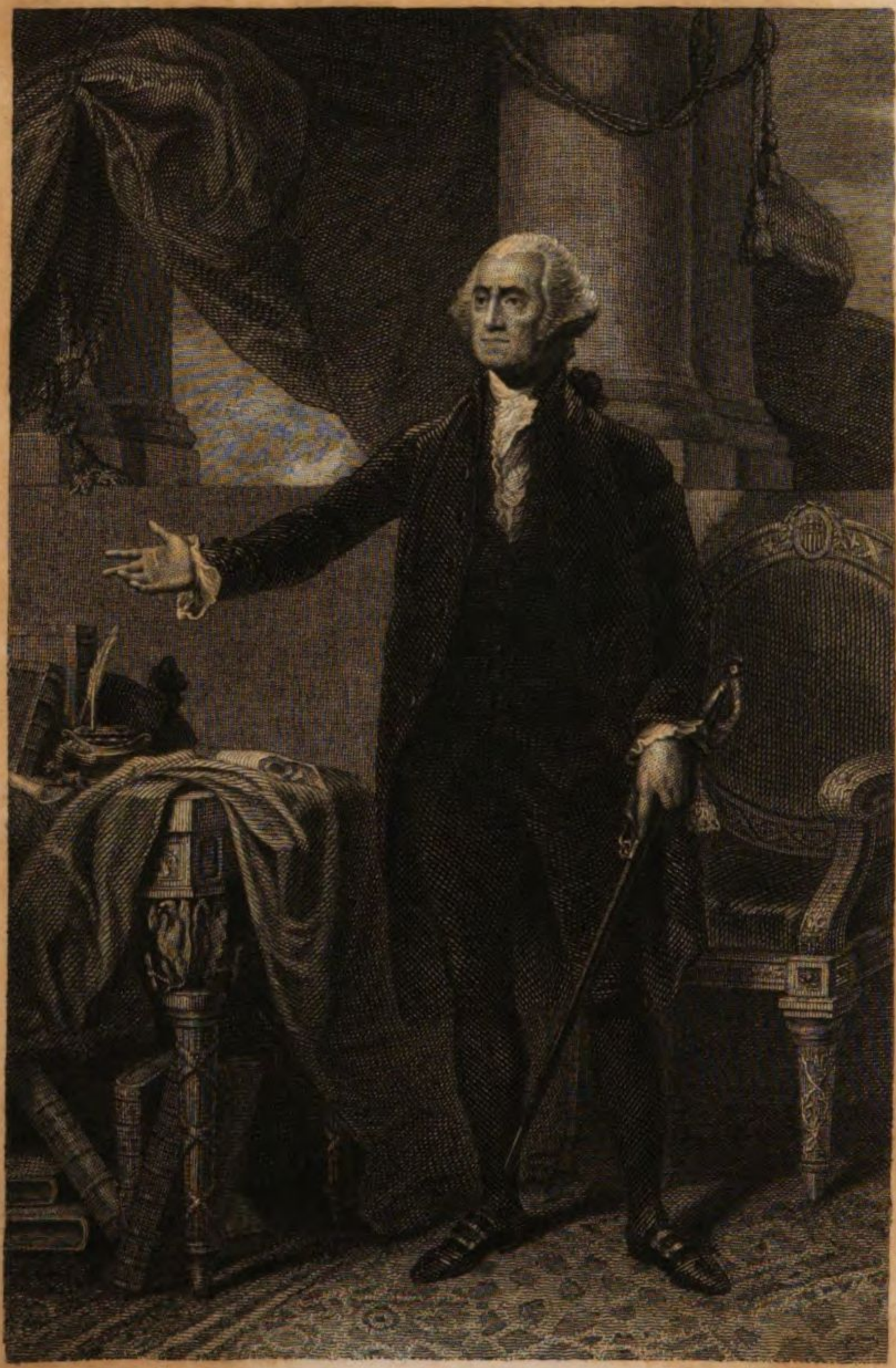
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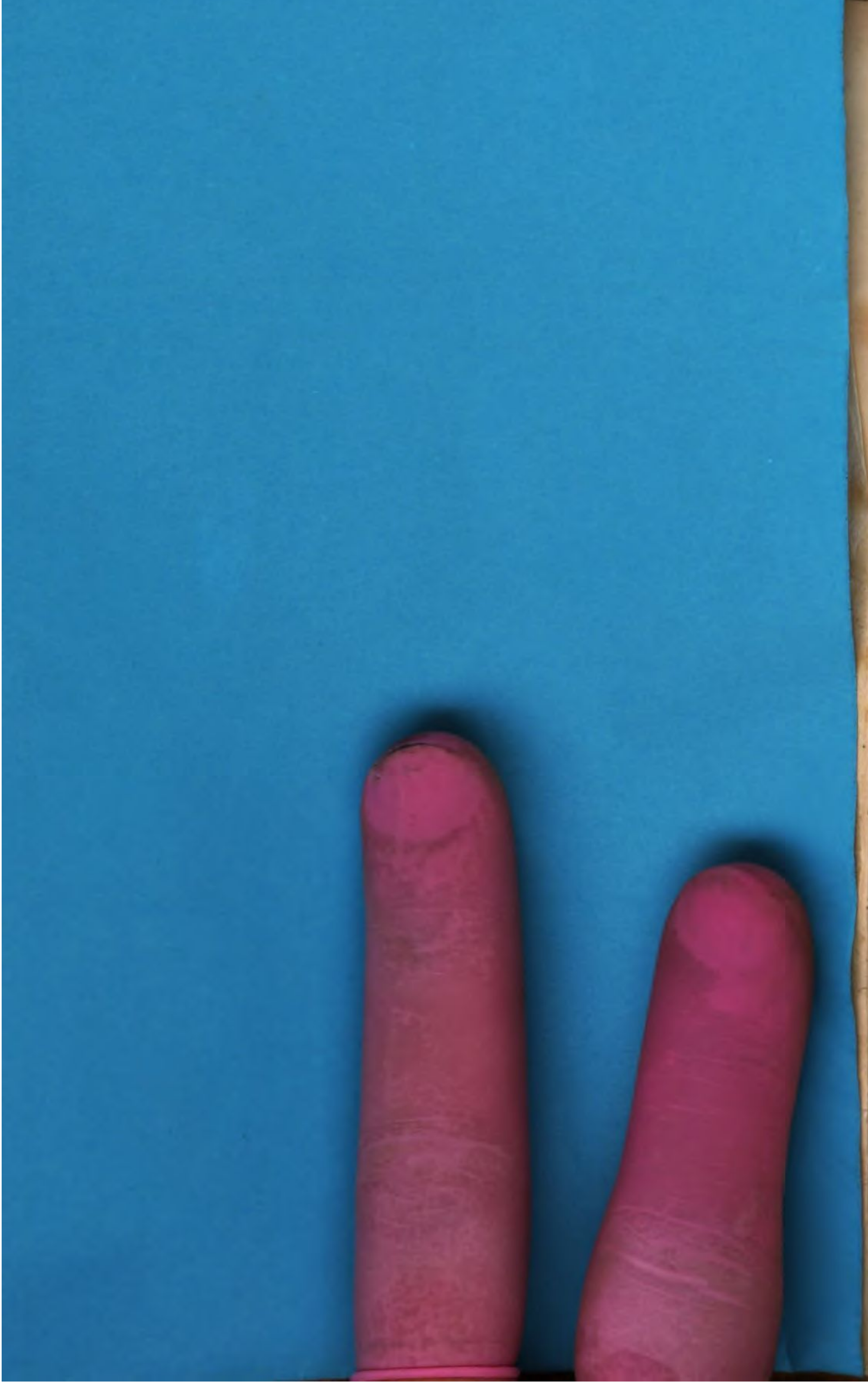
LIFE OF WASHINGTON.



Davenport. fculp.

GENERAL WASHINGTON.

London Published by Thomas Tegg & Son, Cheapside 1st Decr 1885.



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A Declaration By the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to ~~assume from that subordination which they have hitherto held,~~ assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal & independent; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inherent & inalienable rights, that among these are life & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government laying it's foundation on such principles, & organising it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed but when a long train of abuses & usurpations [begun at a distinguished period, &] pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government & to provide new guards for their future security such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, & such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. the history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of [unremitting] injuries and usurpations, [among which, appears no solitary fact but all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this let facts be submitted to a candid world [for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood]]

he has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good:

he has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate & pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

he has refused to pass other laws for the accomodation of large districts of people unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, & formidable to tyrants only

he has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable & distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures;

he has dissolved Representative houses repeatedly [& continually] for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people;

he has refused for a long time after such dissolutions* to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without & convulsions within.

he has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, & raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands:

he has [obstructed by suffering] the administration of justice [totally] to cease in some of these states refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers:

he has made [our] judges dependant on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount & payment of their salaries:

he has erected a multitude of new offices [by a self assumed power] & sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people & eat out their substance:

he has kept among us in times of peace standing armies [& ships of war] without the consent of our legislatures

he has affected to render the military independent of & superior to the civil power:

he has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions and unacknoleged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation, for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

for protecting them by a mock trial from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

for imposing taxes on us without our consent;

for depriving us of the benefit of trial by jury in many cases;

for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences:

for abolishing the free system of english laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government and enlarging it's boundaries so as to render it at once an example & instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these [states]

† Dr Franklin's hand writing

† Dr Franklin

* mr adams's hand writing

* mr adams

+ Dr Franklin

†abolishing our most ~~important~~ valuable Laws

for taking away our charters, ~~&~~ altering fundamentally the forms of our governments,

for suspending our own legislatures & declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever:

he has abdicated government here, [by declaring us out of his protection & waging war against us. withdrawing his governors, & declaring us out of his allegiance & protection:]

he has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns & destroyed the lives of our people.

he is at this time transporting large armies Scotch and other of foreign mercenaries to compleat the works of death desolation & tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation:

he has ~~obtained no~~ excited domestic insurrections amongst us and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, & conditions [of existence:]

[he has incited treasonable insurrections of our fellow-citizens, with the allurements of forfeiture & confiscation of our property

he has ~~constrained others taken captive~~ ~~carried~~ ~~on the high seas~~ to bear arms against their country & ~~to~~ ~~bye~~ brethren ~~or to fall themselves by their hands~~

he has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating it's most sacred rights of life & liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. this piratical warfare the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought & sold, and he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this ~~determining to keep open a market where MEN should be bought & sold~~ execrable commerce: and that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them by murdering the people upon whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.]

in every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms, our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries. a prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people [who mean to be free. future ages will scarce believe that the ~~hardiness~~ credulity of one man adventured within the short compass of twelve years only ~~to lay~~ to build a foundation so broad & undisguised for tyranny over a people fostered & fixed in principles of ~~liberty~~ freedom.]

+ Dr Franklin

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. we have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over [these our us states] we have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration & settlement here, [no one of which could warrant so strange a pretension: that these were effected at the expence of our own blood & treasure, unassisted by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain that in constituting indeed our several forms of government, we had adopted one common king, thereby laying a foundation for perpetual league & amity with them but that submission to their parliament was no part of our constitution, nor ever in idea if history may be credited: and] we have appealed to their native justice & magnanimity & we have conjured them by [as well as to] the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which [were likely to would inevitably] interrupt our correspondence connection & ~~correction~~. they too have been deaf to the voice of justice & of consanguinity [& when We must therefore occasions have been given them by the regular course of their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they have by their free election re-established them in power. at this very time too they are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but Scotch & foreign mercenaries to invade & † destroy us ~~deluge us in blood~~. these facts have given the last stab to agonizing affection, and manly spirit bids us renounce for ever these unfeeling brethren. we must endeavor to forget our former love for them, and to hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends. we might have been a free & a great people together; but a communication of grandeur & of freedom it seems is below their dignity. be it so since they will have it: the road to ~~glory~~ & to glory & happiness is open to us too; we will ~~spurn~~ tread it ~~as~~ apart from them ~~separate states~~, and [we must these] acquiesce in the necessity which ~~denounces~~ pronounces our ~~eternal~~ separation! and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind enemies in war, in peace friends

We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions do in the name & by authority of the good people of these colonies [states,] [reject and renounce all allegiance & subjection to the kings of Great Britain & all others who may hereafter claim by, through, or under them; we utterly dissolve & break off all political connection which may have heretofore have subsisted between us & the people or parliament of Great Britain: and finally we do assert and declare these colonies to be free and independant states, and that as free & independant states they ~~shall hereafter~~ have full power to levy war conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, & to do all other acts and things which independant states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration] we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, & our sacred honour.

a different phraseology inserted

+ Dr Franklin

THE

LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

Effects of the Battle of Monmouth—Misconduct and Punishment of General Lee—Alliance of the French—Overtures of England—Conduct of General Washington—Arrival of the French Forces—Dissensions between the French and American Generals composed by Washington—Plan of Congress for the Invasion of Canada set aside by the Influence of Washington.

THE battle of Monmouth, though by no means decisive, gave great satisfaction to Congress, and inspired increased hopes in the minds of the American people. A resolution immediately and unanimously passed the former body, in which their thanks were awarded to General Washington "for the activity with which he moved from the camp at Valley Forge in pursuit of the enemy, for his distinguished exertions in forming the line of battle, and for his great good conduct in the action." He was at the same time requested "to signify the thanks of Congress to the officers and men under his command, who distinguished themselves by their valour and conduct in the battle."

In the letter to Congress, in which the general announced the particulars of the action, a very guarded allusion was made to General Lee. This arose from some circumstances which occurred on the field, which require a slight notice. In the commencement of the battle, and when Washington with his troops was approaching the disputed ground, he met Lee, who was by his own request commanding the front division, retreating before the enemy, without having made any considerable efforts to retain his ground. Surprised and chagrined by this occurrence, he addressed Lee with some warmth and in terms of disapprobation of his retreat, and arranged a fresh disposition on ground which was favourable for checking the advancing enemy. He inquired if he were willing to command upon the new ground. "Your orders," said Lee, "shall be obeyed, and I will not be the first to leave the field." These steps averted the threatening mischief, and no further ill effects would have ensued but for the haughtiness of General Lee, which could not brook the reprimand even of the commander-in-chief. The next day he resented the alleged affront by two offensive letters to his superior, in which he demanded satisfaction as for an insult. After some deliberation, Washington replied to these communications by assuring him "that he should have an opportunity of justifying himself to the army, to America, and to the world, or of convincing them that he had been guilty of breach of orders and misconduct before the enemy." Upon his expressing his desire for a court-martial in preference to a court of inquiry, he was arrested on the following charges:

1. For disobedience of orders in not attacking

the enemy on the 28th of June, agreeably to repeated instructions.

2. For misbehaviour before the enemy on the same day, by making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat.

3. For disrespect to the commander-in-chief, in two letters.

Of these several charges the court-martial found him guilty, and he was accordingly suspended from his command for one year. At the same time they modified the terms of the second charge, and found him guilty "of misbehaviour by making an unnecessary, and, in some few instances, a disorderly retreat."

With the battle of Monmouth, the active operations in the middle states concluded for this campaign, and, on the approach of winter, the army went into quarters in the neighbourhood of the High Lands, while Sir Henry Clinton proceeded with his troops to New York. The possession of this city by the British constituted the chief difference between the relative condition of the contending parties at this time and at the close of 1776, and this event is impressively noticed by Washington in a private letter written at the time. "It is not a little pleasing," said he, "nor less wonderful to contemplate, that, after two years' manœuvring and undergoing the strangest vicissitudes, both armies are brought back to the very point they set out from, and the offending party in the beginning is now reduced to the use of the pickaxe and the spade for defence. The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel who

lacks faith, and more than wicked that has not gratitude to acknowledge his obligations."

The time was now come, as has been already intimated, when the character of the American war was to be materially changed by the appearance of a new enemy in the field. The French government, which may be regarded as the natural rival and enemy of Great Britain, was at this time especially hostile to her in consequence of the events of the war between them, which terminated in 1763, in which so fine a territory was for ever lost to that power. This ill-will had been in a great measure latent for a considerable portion of the interval which had elapsed since the conclusion of that struggle; but, for some short time prior to the full development of the designs of France, her conduct had clearly indicated a leaning to the side of America, and this leaning was most clearly apparent to all except to the infatuated ministers, who ought to have been the parties first acquainted with the fact. At length, however, in the early part of the year 1778, the French government manifested their intentions in a declaration which set forth the actual independence of America as justifying the establishment of a treaty of friendship and commerce between them and France. This document also stated, with a degree of *naïveté* most mortifying to the British cabinet, that the contracting parties had taken great care not to stipulate for any exclusive advantages in favour of France, and that the Americans had reserved to themselves the right of treating with any other nation whatever upon the same footing of equality and reciprocity.

Before, however, the news had arrived in America, that these momentous treaties of alliance and commerce had been concluded with France, the draughts of two bills carried through the British legislature by the influence of Lord North came to the hands of Major-General Tryon, the British governor of New York. The object of the first was, as before stated, to enable His Majesty to appoint commissioners to treat concerning the means of quieting the disorders existing in America; and of the second, to declare the intentions of the British Parliament concerning the *exercise of the right* of imposing taxes on these colonies. Although the title of one of these acts supposes the very right, the denial of which constituted the great issue between the two countries, yet the subsequent provisions of both were such as, if they had been proposed at some earlier stages of the war, would have healed every breach and effected a cordial union. But opinion had advanced with unprecedented rapidity in the interval, and the overtures came too late.

No sooner had Tryon obtained possession of the bills, than he forwarded them to General Washington with a letter, in which, either through the gross ignorance under which he laboured, in common with his superiors, or through sheer impertinence, which was equally epidemic in his party at this time, he requested the general to communicate their contents to his army.

The conduct of Washington on this occasion was highly characteristic. For the present he took no notice whatever of Tryon's communication, but forwarded it with the draughts of the bills to Congress, together with some advice as to the

treatment of these propositions, upon which they cheerfully acted. The bills were referred to a committee of three, who speedily brought up a report, in which they commented upon every part of the documents with the most contemptuous asperity, and concluded by recommending that "the several states be called upon to use their most strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of continental troops in the field as soon as possible, and that all the militia of the said states be held in readiness to act as occasion may require."

This report was adopted without hesitation by Congress, and resolutions were founded upon it, recommending the states to pardon, with such limitations as they might think proper, those misguided citizens who had been instigated to make war against the United States. These resolutions were printed in English and German, and sent to General Washington for circulation. This step furnished the General with the opportunity he desired. He immediately transmitted copies to Major-General Tryon, politely acknowledging the receipt of his letter and enclosures, and requesting that he would kindly employ his influence to place these resolutions before the attention of those upon whom they were intended to operate!

In July 1778, the French commander Count D'Estaign appeared off the Capes of the Delaware with twelve ships of the line and six frigates, bearing a respectable military force. From thence he proceeded along the coast to New York, and at both places was only prevented by accidents, manifestly unavoidable, from destroying the British fleet. Finding, however, that an attack upon New York was impracticable, a joint expedition was planned

against Rhode Island, while General Washington had moved his army to the White Plains, that he might the more readily co-operate with the French Admiral against New York. Every thing now seemed to promise success to the American arms; but these appearances were again accidentally frustrated. On sailing out of the harbour of Newport to attack Lord Howe, he was overtaken by a violent storm, by which his fleet was so seriously damaged, that he determined on repairing to Boston harbour for the purpose of refitting. The harbour of Newport being thus deserted, was open to the entrance of the British, who immediately took possession of the abandoned works. General Sullivan, who commanded there, was forced to retreat, and warmly remonstrated against the conduct of D'Estaign in leaving Newport. Unhappily he did not confine himself to remonstrances, but in general orders applied some language to the conduct of the French which they deemed an affront, and testified a disposition to resent. Thus was the cause of American Independence endangered afresh by the disaffection of those whose alliance had seemed to insure its success; nor would any thing but the influence, discretion, and mildness of General Washington have restored harmony and averted the impending mischief. He immediately wrote to General Sullivan, stating his apprehension that, should the expedition fail in consequence of being abandoned by the French fleet, loud complaints might be made by the officers employed in it. He remarked that prudence dictated the propriety of giving this affair the best appearance, and of attributing the withdrawing of the fleet from Rhode Island to absolute necessity; that the reasons for

this line of conduct were too obvious to need explanation. That of the most importance was, that their enemies, both internal and external, would seize the first cause of disgust between the allies, and endeavour to convert it into a serious rupture.

The Congress took early measures to prevent the publication of the protest into which Sullivan and his officers had entered, and communicated to the former their resolution, which Washington accompanied with the following letter :—

"The disagreement between the army under your command and the fleet has given me singular uneasiness. The continent at large is concerned in our cordiality, and it should be kept up by all possible means consistent with our honour and policy. First impressions, you know, are always longest retained, and will serve to fix in a great degree our national character with the French. In our conduct towards them we should remember that they are a people old in war, very strict in military etiquette, and apt to take fire when others scarcely seem warmed. Permit me to recommend in the most particular manner the cultivation of harmony and good agreement, and your endeavours to destroy that ill-humour which may have found its way among the officers. It is of the utmost importance, too, that the soldiers and the people should know nothing of this misunderstanding, or, if it has reached them, that means may be used to stop its progress and prevent its effects."

By these and similar communications, both to the American and French generals, Washington restored a desire for harmonious co-operation, and once more enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing his resources strengthened by concentration and union.

No sooner had the commander-in-chief adjusted by his timely interference the dissensions between the allied officers, than his concern was attracted by still more serious errors committed in a higher quarter. The members of Congress whose interposition in the conduct of the war with Great Britain was ever the more busy in proportion to their unacquaintance with all that was desirable for a legislature to know, now entertained the plan of attacking the British possessions in Canada. It was proposed to effect this by means of separate detachments of American troops acting at different points, and all in concert with a French fleet and army on the river St. Lawrence. The French minister was to be induced to aid this expedition by the influence of the Marquis de la Fayette.

Upon the completion of the plan it was submitted to the general for his opinion, and it was not long before his far-seeing prudence led him to that decision which subsequent experience has so abundantly confirmed. He opposed it in an elaborate letter to Congress, in which he urged chiefly the impolicy of entering into any engagements with France without a moral certainty of being able to execute the part assigned to America. In order to show that this was impossible, he dwelt upon the number required for the prosecution of the plan, the barren character of the district through which the forces must pass, the difficulty of supplying provisions, the labour of constructing large magazines at different places, the want of forage, and other similar objections. This letter was referred to a committee, who allowed great force to the objections of General Washington, but still advised the execution of the scheme. This

conduct greatly perplexed the general: he again urged the danger of the attempt, and closed his reply in the following manner:—

"I could wish to lay before the Congress more minutely the state of the army, the condition of supplies, and the requisites necessary for carrying into execution an undertaking that may involve the most serious events. If Congress think this can be done more satisfactorily in a personal conference, I hope to have the army in such a situation before I can receive their answer, as to afford me an opportunity of giving my attendance."

This latter proposal was accepted, and the general proceeded to Congress, from whom a committee was chosen to confer with him. His objections were found unanswerable, and the expedition was abandoned.

In this and all other instances throughout the life of General Washington, it is not easy to determine wherein he was most essential to the welfare of his country; whether in the skill and bravery with which he led her armies to victory, or in the passive aspect of his character; in the unconquerable firmness with which he stood up under the severest complication of misfortune; in the singular goodness by which he was qualified to compose the dissensions of men and parties, and the commanding but unobtruded influence with which he could sway the collective mind of a legislature or an empire.

CHAPTER II.

Relaxation of Efforts in America—Letter of General Washington on the subject—Dissatisfaction of the Army—Resolution of certain Officers in the Jersey Brigade—Communications of Washington to them and to Congress—Successes at West Point, and Thanks of Congress to Washington and his Officers.

It might, perhaps, appear upon a cursory view of the present aspect of American affairs, that the road to political independence was now unobstructed: but the truth is, that the very aids which promised to facilitate its progress, had the temporary effect of lulling the vigilance and paralysing the energies of the American people. They now regarded their success as certain, and the singular efforts by which their advantages had been gained, were remitted, and gave place to indolent confidence in their new allies. It is not too much to say that all hopes of American independence would now have inevitably ceased, but for the conduct of him who appears throughout as the tutelar genius of the cause. Washington saw with great concern the prevalent temper of his countrymen. He knew enough of Great Britain to know that the war was not yet near its conclusion, and stimulated the Congress and the States to exertion by every consideration he could suggest. The resolution empowering him to recruit the army, did not pass the legislature until the 23rd

of January, 1779, and the requisition was not made until the 9th of March. These and other circumstances excited the most serious apprehensions in the mind of General Washington, which he expressed in the following letter to a confidential friend of great political influence:—

MY DEAR SIR,

I am particularly desirous of a free communication of sentiments with you at this time, because I view things very differently, I fear, from what people in general do, who seem to think the contest at an end, and that to make money and get places are the only things now remaining to be done. I have seen, without despondency, even for a moment, the hours which America has styled her gloomy ones; but I have beheld no day since the commencement of hostilities, when I have thought her liberties in such imminent danger as at present. Friends and foes seem now to combine to pull down the goodly fabric we have hitherto been raising at the expense of so much time, blood, and treasure; and, unless the bodies politic will exert themselves to bring things back to first principles, correct abuses, and punish our internal foes, inevitable ruin must follow. Indeed we seem to be verging so fast to destruction, that I am filled with sensations to which I have been a stranger till within these three months. Our enemy beholds with exultation and joy how effectually we labour for their benefit, and from being in a state of absolute despair, and on the point of evacuating America, are now on tiptoe. Nothing, therefore, in my judgment can save us but a total reformation in our own conduct, or some decisive turn of affairs

in Europe. The former, alas! to our shame be it spoken, is less likely to happen than the latter, as it is now consistent with the views of the speculators, various tribes of money-makers, and stock-jobbers of all denominations, to continue the war for their own private emolument, without considering that this avarice and thirst for gain must plunge every thing, including themselves, in one common ruin.

Were I to indulge my present feelings, and give a loose to that freedom of expression which my unreserved friendship for you would prompt to, I should say a great deal on this subject; but letters are liable to so many accidents, and the sentiments of men in office are sought after by the enemy with so much avidity, and besides conveying useful knowledge (if they get into their hands) for the superstructure of their plans, are so often perverted to the worst of purposes, that I shall be somewhat reserved, notwithstanding this letter goes by a private hand to Mount Vernon. I cannot refrain lamenting, however, in the most poignant terms, the fatal policy too prevalent in most of the states, of employing their ablest men at home in posts of honour or profit before the great national interest is fixed upon a solid basis.

"To me it appears no unjust simile to compare the affairs of this great continent to the mechanism of a clock, each state representing some one or other of the smaller parts of it, which they are endeavouring to put in fine order without considering how useless and unavailing their labour is, unless the great wheel, or spring, which is to set the whole in motion, is also well attended to and kept in good order. I allude to no particular state,

nor do I mean to cast reflections upon any one of them; nor ought I, it may be said, to do so upon their representatives: but as it is a fact too notorious to be concealed, that Congress is rent by party, that much business of a trifling nature and personal concern withdraws their attention from matters of great national moment at this critical period; when it is also known that idleness and dissipation take place of close attention and application, no man who wishes well to the liberties of this country, and desires to see its rights established, can avoid crying out, Where are our men of abilities! why do they not come forth to save their country! Let this voice, my dear Sir, call upon you, Jefferson, and others. Do not, from a mistaken opinion that we are to sit down under our own vine and fig-tree, let our hitherto noble struggle end in ignominy. Believe me, when I tell you there is danger of it. I have pretty good reason for thinking that administration a little while ago had resolved to give the matter up, and negotiate a peace with us upon almost any terms: but I shall be much mistaken if they do not now, from the present state of our currency, dissensions, and other circumstances, push matters to the utmost extremity. Nothing, I am sure, will prevent it but the interruption of Spain, and their disappointed hope from Russia."

* * * *

"I am, &c. &c.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

Nor was this the only circumstance which called for the interposition of the general's influence. The depreciation of the paper currency had so

affected the pay of the officers, that many were reduced to absolute indigence. Their sufferings led to desperate measures; and in the following May, upon the Jersey brigade being ordered on an expedition into the Indian country, the officers of the first regiment addressed the legislature of the state through the colonel, stating that, unless their pay was attended to immediately, they would in three days resign their commissions.

General Washington at once foresaw the pernicious results which would ensue from such a proceeding to the army at large, and he endeavoured at once to obviate them by addressing a letter to General Maxwell, the tendency of which may be estimated from the following passages:—

"There is nothing which has happened in the course of the war that has given me so much pain as the remonstrance you mention from the officers of the first Jersey regiment. I cannot but consider it as a hasty and imprudent step, which, on more cool consideration, they will themselves condemn. I am very sensible of the inconveniences under which the officers of the army labour, and hope they do me the justice to believe that my endeavours to procure them relief are incessant. There is more difficulty, however, in satisfying their wishes than perhaps they are aware of. Our resources have been hitherto very limited. The situation of our money is no small embarrassment, for which, though there are remedies, they cannot be the work of a moment. Government is not insensible of the merits and sacrifices of the officers, nor, I am persuaded, unwilling to make a compensation; but it is a truth, of which a little observation must convince us, that it is very much strait-

ened in the means. Great allowances ought on this account to be made for any delay and seeming backwardness which may appear. Some of the states, indeed, have done as generously as it is at this juncture in their power, and if others have been less expeditious, it ought to be ascribed to some peculiar cause, which a little time, aided by example, will remove. The patience and perseverance of the army have been, under every disadvantage, such as to do them the highest honour, both at home and abroad, and have inspired me with an unlimited confidence in their virtue, which has consoled me amidst every perplexity and reverse of fortune, to which our affairs in a struggle of this nature were necessarily exposed. Now that we have made so great a progress to the attainment of the end we have in view, so that we cannot fail without a most shameful desertion of our own interests, any thing like a change of conduct would imply a very unhappy change of principles and a forgetfulness as well of what we owe to ourselves as to our country. Did I suppose it possible this could be the case even in a single regiment of the army, I should be mortified and chagrined beyond expression. I should feel it as a wound given to my own honour, which I consider as embarked with that of the army at large. But this I believe to be impossible. Any corps that was about to set an example of the kind would weigh well the consequences, and no officer of common discernment and sensibility would hazard them. If they should stand alone in it, independent of other consequences, what would be their feelings on reflecting, that they had held themselves out to the world in a point of light inferior to the rest of the army? Or if their

example should be followed and become general, how could they console themselves for having been the foremost in bringing ruin and disgrace upon their country? They would remember that the army would share a double portion of the general infamy and distress, and that the character of an American officer would become as despicable as it is now glorious.

"I confess the appearances in the present instance are disagreeable, but I am convinced they seem to mean more than they really do. The Jersey officers have not been outdone by any others in the qualities either of citizens or soldiers; and I am confident no part of them would seriously intend any thing that would be a stain on their former reputation. The gentlemen cannot be in earnest; they have only reasoned wrong about the means of attaining a good end; and, on consideration, I hope and flatter myself they will renounce what must appear improper. At the opening of a campaign, when under marching orders for an important service, their own honour, duty to the public, and to themselves, and a regard to military propriety, will not suffer them to persist in a measure which would be a violation of them all. It will even wound their delicacy, coolly to reflect that they have hazarded a step which has an air of dictating terms to their country by taking advantage of the necessity of the moment.

"The declaration they have made to the state at so critical a time, that unless they obtain relief in the short period of three days, they must be considered out of the service, has very much that aspect; and the seeming relaxation of continuing until the State can have a reasonable time to pro-

vide other officers, will be thought only a superficial veil. I am now to request that you will convey my sentiments to the gentlemen concerned, and endeavour to make them sensible that they are in an error. The service for which the regiment was intended will not admit of delay. It must at all events march on Monday morning in the first place to this camp, and further directions will be given when it arrives. I am sure I shall not be mistaken in expecting a prompt and cheerful obedience."

Although General Washington thus discountenanced the defensive measures of the officers, no one was more sensible than he of the criminal neglect with which the Congress were chargeable. The injured parties, showed by their reply, that they were more sensible of their own grievances than of the force of the general's reasoning :—

"At length," said they, "we have lost all confidence in our legislature. Reason and experience forbid that we should have any. Few of us have private fortunes ; many have families who already are suffering everything that can be received from an ungrateful country. Are we then to suffer all the inconveniences, fatigues, and dangers of a military life, while our wives and our children are perishing for want of common necessaries at home, and that without the most distant prospect of reward, for our pay is now only nominal ? We are sensible that your Excellency cannot wish nor desire this from us.

"We are sorry that you should imagine we meant to disobey orders. It was and still is our determination to march with our regiment, and to do the duty of officers until the legislature should have a reasonable time to appoint others, but no

longer. We beg leave to assure your Excellency that we have the highest sense of your ability and virtues; that executing your orders has ever given us pleasure; that we love the service and we love our country. But when that country becomes so lost to virtue and justice as to forget to support its servants, it then becomes their duty to retire from its service."

Although General Washington felt it his duty to exhort the complainants to order and obedience, yet he adopted a very different tone in addressing the Congress :—

" The patience of men, animated by a sense of duty and honour," said he, " will support them to a certain point, beyond which it will not go. I doubt not Congress will be sensible of the danger of an extreme in this respect, and will pardon my anxiety to obviate it."

The endeavours of Washington at this time to stimulate the exertions of his countrymen, were so far effectual, that, at the commencement of the campaign of 1779, he found 16,000 men under his command—a force very nearly equal to that of the British commander. It was, however, obviously out of his power to make anything like a successful attack upon the strong holds of the British; and he therefore so disposed his troops as to protect the country from the incursions of the enemy and to guard the high lands on the North River. The principal American post was now at West Point, situate on the west side of the Hudson, where was accumulated the bulk of the provisions and military stores. For this purpose it was peculiarly eligible, both from its elevated and commanding natural position and from the fortifications with which it

had been still further strengthened. Near to this point was the principal ferry over the Hudson, which was commanded on either side by forts or ridges of high land called Stony Point and Verplank Point, both of which were in the possession of the Americans. Sir Henry Clinton readily perceived the importance of these positions, and, on the last day of May, moved with the greater part of his force up the river to surprise them. On his approach, Stony Point was evacuated, but so rapid were his movements, that the garrison of Verplank were unable to retire, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Having fortified both positions, Sir Henry returned with his army to New York.

This loss was of serious consequence to the Americans, as it forbade them the use of King's Ferry, and Washington resolved upon regaining them. But the consideration of the difficulty of operating on both sides of the river at once, and the hope, that the reduction of the stronger would necessitate the surrender of the weaker, induced him to confine his attack to Stony Point. The service was committed to General Wayne, and midnight of the 15th of July was fixed on for the attack. The works could only be approached by a narrow passage over a low marshy ground, and over this the troops marched under a heavy fire of artillery and musketry; and, without the discharge of a single gun, carried them at the point of the bayonet. This service was executed with little loss to the Americans, but the British lost 63 killed, 68 wounded, and 543 made prisoners. This success, however, did not secure the King's Ferry to the conquerors, nor did they long enjoy any of its advantages. Sir Henry Clinton immediately

moved again up the North River to recover the post, and Washington, not wishing to draught from his main army a sufficient number to ensure the fort under so severe an attack, destroyed the works and retired to West Point.

Though these transactions but slightly affected the general aspect of the war, yet they afforded to Congress an opportunity which they were glad to embrace. They immediately passed a vote of thanks to the General "for the wisdom, vigilance, and magnanimity with which he conducted the military operations of the nation, and particularly for the enterprise upon Stony Point." They also unanimously voted their thanks to General Wayne for his brave and soldier-like attack, and presented him a gold medal commemorative of the event.

CHAPTER III.

Alliance of Spain with America—Consequent Suggestions of General Washington—Distress in the American Army—Insults received from the British — Arrival of Part of the French Armament—Miscarriages of the Americans—Detention of the Remainder of the French Force.

DURING the summer of 1779, Spain engaged in the war with Great Britain on the side of France. This further accession of aid had considerably modified the conduct of General Washington. Expecting substantial assistance from these quarters, he refrained from hazarding any decisive engagements, and contented himself with cautiously acting on the defensive, so that the hopes of concluding the war with this campaign were disappointed. The time, however, which was afforded by a comparative relaxation from active service, was devoted by Washington to an object, the prosecution of which had been but little encouraged by past success. This was to convince the Congress of the impolicy and danger of their present system, or want of system, in the administration of their military affairs. It will, doubtless, excite the astonishment of posterity that the experience of such repeated evils flowing from the existing arrangements, did not induce the legislature to listen to the advice of their commander-in-chief; insomuch that the evils of short enlistments were at this period as heavy

and embarrassing as they were before Washington exposed them, and prayed for their removal in every communication, public and private. In October of this year, he presented to Congress a minute report of the state of the army, by which it appeared that between that time and June following, the time of service of one half of the privates would expire. To supply this deficiency, he submitted a plan, founded upon the principle of temporary enlistment, which he had so long unsuccessfully laboured to supersede. It contained, as a leading provision, that each state be annually informed by Congress of the real deficiency of its troops, that the men drafted join the army on the 1st of January; and that on, or before the first of October annually, a return, similar to that which he then presented, should be transmitted to Congress to enable them to make their demands with precision. Notwithstanding the manifest expediency of following these suggestions, they were never carried into effect. The number of independent authorities to be consulted, the want of a supreme executive—these and similar defects paralysed every effort of the commander-in-chief, and the result clearly demonstrated that whatever advantages might be connected with such a political system as then existed in America, it was wretchedly ill-adapted for the despatch of business.

On the approach of winter, 1779, the American army built themselves huts for winter quarters. They divided themselves between two positions, Westpoint and Morristown, in New Jersey; at which latter place Washington made his headquarters. Here the army again suffered extreme privations, the extent and causes of which it will

be interesting to learn from the General's correspondence:—

"Since the date of my last," says he to General Schuyler, "we have had the virtue and patience of the army put to the severest trial; sometimes it has been five or six days without bread, at other times as many days without meat, and once or twice two or three days without either. I hardly thought it possible at one period that we should be able to keep it together, nor could it have been done but for the exertions of the magistrates in the several counties of this state, on whom I was obliged to call, expose our situation to them, and in plain terms declare that we were reduced to the alternative of disbanding or catering for ourselves, unless the inhabitants would afford us their aid. I allotted to each county a certain proportion of flour or grain, and a certain number of cattle to be delivered on certain days; and, for the honour of the magistrates and good disposition of the people, I must add, that my requisitions were punctually complied with, and in many counties exceeded. Nothing but this great exertion could have saved the army from dissolution or starving, as we were bereft of every hope from the commissaries. At one time the soldiers ate every kind of horse food but hay; buck-wheat, common wheat, rye, and Indian corn composed the meal which made their bread. As an army, they bore it with the most heroic patience; but sufferings like these, accompanied with the want of clothes, blankets, &c., will produce frequent desertion in all armies; and so it happened with us, though it did not excite a single mutiny."

These misfortunes happened at the same time th the most serious miscarriages in the southern

provinces. The army there had been repeatedly defeated under General Yates, Lincoln, and others. In addition to which, the desultory measures of Congress produced little or no effect upon the separate States, and the army remained unrecruited until a late period of the season. Upon this the general remonstrated, as follows, in a letter to an influential member of Congress:—

"Certain I am that unless Congress speaks in a more decisive tone, unless they are vested with powers by the several States, competent to the great purposes of the war, or assume them as matter of right, and they and the States respectively act with more energy than they hitherto have done, our cause is lost. We can no longer drudge on in the old way: by ill timing the adoption of measures, by delays in the execution of them, or by unwarrantable jealousies we incur enormous expenses, and derive no benefit from them. One State will comply with a requisition from Congress, another neglects to do it, and a third executes it by halves; and all differ in the manner, the matter, or so much in point of time, that we are always working up hill; and while such a system as the present one, or rather want of one, prevails, we ever shall be unable to apply our strength or resources to any advantage. This, my dear Sir, is plain language to a member of Congress, but it is the language of truth and friendship; it is the result of long thinking, close application, and strict observation. I see one head gradually changing into thirteen; I see one army branching into thirteen, and instead of looking up to Congress as the supreme controlling power of the United States, considering themselves as depen-

dent on their respective States. In a word, I see the power of Congress declining too fast for the consequence and respect which are due to them as the great representative body of America, and am fearful of the consequences."

In consequence of these representations, Congress deputed a committee to the camp to consult with the commander-in-chief upon the best means of removing the grievances of the army. Their report precisely agreed with that of General Washington, that their resources, their patriotism, and their patience were alike well nigh exhausted. A resolution was accordingly passed by Congress, promising that they would make good all deficiencies in their pay. This measure, however, by no means quieted the starving soldiers. The credit of Congress was at a low ebb, and the murmurs of the army at length broke out into mutiny. Two regiments belonging to Connecticut paraded under arms, and plainly announced their intention either to return to their homes, or to obtain by force of arms that subsistence which Congress had neglected to provide for them. The remainder of the army testified no disposition to suppress these alarming insurrections, and the commander-in-chief found himself surrounded by difficulties which it is scarcely possible to appreciate. The news of these disaffections had been carried to New York, and induced General Knyphausen to project an attack upon General Washington with a view of driving him from his post at Morristown; but he was deceived in the temper of the American army. The internal dissentions of the army by no means alienated their interest from the grand object of their pursuit. A detachment from the

army met and opposed him with the most determined bravery. Unable to defeat the resistance offered alike by the regular soldiery and by the inhabitants of the disputed district, he halted at a settlement called Connecticut Farms. The whole of this village was reduced to ashes; and this act of barbarity was rendered still more odious to the American people by the murder of the clergyman's wife, who was shot dead with her infant at her breast. Such atrocities as these deepened the hatred of the nation at large to those whom they now learned to consider as their relentless persecutors, and may serve to account for the apparent desperation with which they opposed every pacific overture on the part of Great Britain.

General Washington was too weak to hazard an engagement, and conjecturing that the design of Knyphausen was against his camp at Morristown, he ordered that the military stores should be removed to a place of greater security, while he posted his forces so as to cover them. Meanwhile Sir Henry Clinton returned from the conquest of Charlestown, in South Carolina, with four thousand men, and joined Knyphausen at Elizabeth Point, opposite Staten Island, to which he had retired. At this time General Washington made a return to Congress of all the men under his immediate command, from which it appeared that they amounted to a little more than 3,000 men! Upon this scanty force America relied for independence. Happily the combined troops of the enemy remained at Elizabeth Point without making any important attempt, and returned to New York after one unsuccessful attempt to reach the Ame-

rican camp, without effecting any object which could reward their labours.

Still, however, this movement involved a most mortifying insult to the American army, and the commander-in-chief was not a little grieved at his inability to punish it.

"You but too well know," said he, in a letter to a friend, "and will regret with me the cause which justifies this insulting manœuvre on the part of the enemy. It deeply affects the honour of the States, a vindication of which could not be attempted in our present circumstances without most imminently hazarding their security; at least so far as it may depend upon the security of the army. Their character, their interest, their all that is dear, call upon them, in the most pressing manner, to place the army immediately on a respectable footing."

Washington soon found still more pressing reason to urge these earnest exhortations upon his countrymen. The Marquis de la Fayette, who had long since left America for his native land, now returned, and arrived at Boston in a royal frigate in April, 1780, announcing that he had succeeded in the object nearest his heart; namely, in inducing the French government to send over an efficient naval and military force to the assistance of the Americans; and that the armament might be expected speedily to arrive. This intelligence infused new energy into the minds of the Congress and of the States. More liberal provision was made for the war, and many suggestions of General Washington which had hitherto been neglected, were now actively adopted. Still the tardiness with which the army was recruited

impressed him with the deepest concern. Congress had assured the French minister that they would bring into the field twenty-five thousand men, and would lay up magazines adequate to the supply both of the French and their own troops. Washington was fully aware of the vital importance of redeeming every pledge made to their allies, and the unprepared state of the army was therefore matter of intense concern to him.

"The interest of the States," said he, in a letter to Congress, "the honour and reputation of our councils, the justice and gratitude due to our allies, all require that I should, without delay, be enabled to ascertain and inform them what we can or cannot undertake. This is a point which ought now to be determined, on the success of which all our future operations may depend; on which, for want of knowing our prospects, I can make no decision. For fear of involving the fleet and army of our allies in circumstances which would expose them, if not seconded by us, to material inconvenience and hazard; I shall be compelled to suspend it, and the delay may be fatal to our hope."

At length, whilst the Americans were altogether unprepared for the campaign, the first division of the French armament, arrived in the middle of July, at Newport Harbour. It consisted of between five and six thousand men, with a large train of artillery. The first thing which was rendered imperatively necessary by their arrival, was the presence of the commander-in-chief, to concert with the French commanders the plan of operations. Hitherto Washington had obtained no accurate idea of the force which his countrymen would bring into the field, further than what was

guaranteed by the engagement into which Congress had entered. Unhappily, however, that body was far more prompt in the enactment of measures than in their execution—a defect, perhaps, inseparable from a large body over which executive power is equally distributed; and every appearance at this time was against the fulfilment of their part of the covenant. Had a man now stood at the helm of American affairs possessed of less confidence and less commanding decision of character than fell to the lot of Washington, the cause of liberty would have suffered a fatal shipwreck. Difficulties seemed to beset every course of conduct which he could adopt. On the one hand was the danger of losing the invaluable alliance of the French, from inability to fulfil the conditions on which they had entered the field; on the other, that of holding out expectations which the experience of a few weeks must disappoint. In this dilemma he took a step which nothing but his characteristic boldness could have dictated. He wrote to Count de Rochambeau, the French commander, and fearlessly announced his intention of fulfilling every promise of Congress. While, however, he committed himself to that which, from all present appearances, seemed impracticable, he was deeply sensible of the awful magnitude of the crisis, and cast with a tremulous hand the die on which the fate of his country so materially depended. In his letter communicating to Congress the step he had taken, he indicates his own feelings in the following noble language:—

"Pressed on all sides by a choice of difficulties in a moment which requires decision, I have adopted that line of conduct which, comported with

the dignity and faith of Congress, the reputation of these States, and the honour of our arms. I have sent definitive proposals of co-operation to the French admiral and general. Neither the period of the season, nor a regard to decency, would permit delay. The die is cast, and it remains with the States either to fulfil their engagements, preserve their credit, and support their independence, or to involve us in disgrace and defeat. Notwithstanding the failure pointed out by the committee, I shall proceed on the supposition that they will ultimately consult their own interest and honour, and not suffer us to fail for the want of means, which it is evidently in their power to afford. What has been done, and is doing, by some of the States, confirms the opinions I have entertained, of sufficient resources in the country. Of the disposition of the people to submit to any arrangements for bringing them forth, I see no reasonable ground to doubt. If we fail for the want of proper exertions in any of the governments, I trust the responsibility will fall where it ought, and that I shall stand justified to Congress, my country, and the world."

The plan which had been agreed upon between General Washington and his new allies, supposed the superiority of their naval force; but shortly after the arrival of the French, the British were reinforced by a squadron from England, which turned the balance in their favour. Upon their arrival an attack was agreed upon between Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Greaves against the French at Newport. For this purpose, the army was embarked, but on learning the strength of the fortifications at Newport, the commanders aban-

doned the expedition. The temporary absence of Sir Henry suggested to Washington the advantage of then executing his favourite object of recovering New York. For this purpose he crossed the North River, but the return of the British general compelled him to retire.

This miscarriage was still further enhanced by some alterations made by Congress in the Quartermaster-general's department, in direct opposition to the wishes of General Washington; the result of which was the failure of provisions, and the necessity of subsisting the army by forage upon the distressed inhabitants of the country.

But what completed the failure of all the hopes which were inspired at the commencement of the campaign, was the blockade of the second French armament in the harbour of Brest, which rendered their arrival on the American coast impossible for this season. Washington himself entertained hopes that this campaign would be decisive, and in the following letter he gave loose to his feelings of mortification with unusual plainness:—

"We are now drawing to a close an inactive campaign, the beginning of which appeared pregnant with events of a very favourable complexion. I hoped, but I hoped in vain, that a prospect was opening which would enable me to fix a period to my military pursuits, and restore me to domestic life. The favourable disposition of Spain, the promised succour from France, the combined force in the West Indies, the declaration of Russia (acceded to by other powers of Europe, humiliating to the naval pride and power of Great Britain,) the superiority of France and Spain by sea in Europe, the Irish claims and English disturbances, formed

in the aggregate an opinion in my breast, which is not very susceptible of peaceful dreams, that the hour of deliverance was not far distant: for that, however unwilling Great Britain might be to yield the point, it would not be in her power to continue the contest. But, alas! these prospects, flattering as they were, have proved delusory, and I see nothing before us but accumulating distress. We have been half of our time without provisions, and are likely to continue so; we have no magazines, nor money to form them; we have lived upon expedients until we can live no longer. In a word, the history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary devices instead of system and economy. It is in vain, however, to look back, nor is it our business to do so. Our case is not desperate, if virtue exists in the people, and there is wisdom among our rulers; but to suppose that this great revolution can be accomplished by a temporary army, that this army will be subsisted by state supplies, and that taxation alone is adequate to our wants, is, in my opinion, absurd, and as unreasonable as to expect an inversion of the order of nature to accommodate itself to our views. If it were necessary, it might be easily proved to any person of a moderate understanding, that an annual army, or any army raised on the spur of the occasion, besides being unqualified for the end designed, is in various ways which could be enumerated, ten times more expensive than a permanent body of men under good organisation and military discipline, which never was nor ever will be the case with new troops. A thousand arguments resulting from experience and the nature of things, might also be adduced to prove that the army, if it is to depend

on state supplies, must disband or starve, and that taxation alone, especially at this late hour, cannot furnish the means to carry on the war. Is it not time to retract from error, and benefit from experience, or do we want further proof of the ruinous system we have pertinaciously adhered to?"

CHAPTER IV.

Treachery of General Arnold—Capture and Death of Major André—Letter of General Washington urging Reform in the Arrangements of the Army—Conduct of Congress—Alliance of Holland.

HITHERTO the difficulties which beset the American cause had been chiefly occasioned by their inferiority to the British in numbers, discipline, and resources, and to the delays and mismanagement consequent upon the division and recent possession of power, and the inexperience necessary to an infant state. But now, for the first time, that cause was threatened by the treachery of one who had hitherto been regarded as its zealous promoter. On the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British, General Arnold had been appointed to the command in that city; and, while occupying that post, had rendered himself obnoxious to the inhabitants by his extravagance, and consequent peculation and fraud. At length formal charges were brought against him by the government of Pennsylvania, upon which he was convicted and sentenced to be reprimanded by the commander-in-chief.

From the period of this disgrace he entertained designs of revenge upon his country, which he employed every manœuvre to facilitate. Pretending inability, from the state of his health, to endure the hardships of the field, he sought for a long time

the command of West Point, which he knew to be a post of the utmost importance from its relative situation to New York, and which, from the strength of its position, was denominated the Gibraltar of America. This post he contrived to obtain from General Washington at the time when he left it on the expedition before-mentioned, against New York, and he no sooner obtained it than he commenced his plan for betraying it into the hands of the enemy. These views he communicated to Colonel Robinson, an officer in the British army, and thus a correspondence was opened between him and Sir Henry Clinton.

Major John André, an adjutant-general in his Majesty's service, and a gentleman of considerable talents and accomplishments, was appointed to confer with Arnold, and to assist in executing his infamous design. For this purpose he adopted in his correspondence the fictitious name of John Anderson, while Arnold took that of Gustavus; and, to facilitate their communications, the Vulture, a British sloop of war, was moved up the North River, but not sufficiently near to West Point to excite suspicion.

A plan was agreed upon, by which the most accessible part of the fortress might be left open to the invasion of the British, and a place was appointed at which the two parties should meet at the dead of night and make final arrangements. André accordingly came ashore at night, and the interview was held. Unfortunately, however, for the success of the plot, the interview was protracted till day-light, and, at its close, the boatman refused to row the major back to the Vulture, in consequence of its having moved from its position owing

to an attack from a gun on shore. The only alternative left to André was to proceed by land to New York, and, having exchanged his dress for that of a private gentleman, he set out on his journey on horseback. He was furnished with a pass from Arnold, authorising John Anderson "to go to the White Plains, or lower, if he thought proper, he being on public service." Thus provided he passed the American guards unsuspected, and would probably have arrived safely at New York, had he not encountered three militia men who were scouring the country at the time, and one of whom seized the bridle of his horse and demanded his business there. Robbed of his accustomed presence of mind by this sudden surprise, he neglected to show his pass from Arnold, which would have secured him from all further molestation. Instead of this he inquired of the men where they came from; to which they replied, "From below," meaning from New York. Entrapped by this stratagem he at once replied "So am I;" on which they seized his horse and forbade him to proceed. Detecting his mistake he offered them his purse and watch if they would permit him to pass on. These bribes, however, they sturdily refused, and proceeded to search their prisoner. They found concealed in his boots exact returns of the resources of all kinds, at West Point, in Arnold's hand-writing; and their suspicions being thus confirmed, they conducted their prisoner to Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson. Here, with most noble disregard to his own safety, and only concerned for that of Arnold, he maintained his assumed character, and requested that his commanding officer might be informed that Anderson was taken.

Unsuspicious of the fidelity of Arnold, Jameson complied with the request, and thus an opportunity of escape was offered to the traitor at the sacrifice of his unfortunate comrade.

When sufficient time had been allowed for Arnold's escape, André threw off his disguise and declared himself a British officer. Arrangements were immediately made for the security of West Point; and a board of general officers was appointed to consider in what character André should be regarded, and to what punishment he was liable. This board pronounced their opinion, without hesitation, that André was a spy, and should suffer death accordingly.

This verdict was forwarded to the commander-in-chief. His generous mind was moved with the deepest pity for a man who had testified such entire disregard of his own life, and exerted himself so nobly to secure the treacherous villain who had engaged him in this hazardous enterprise. At the same time it is not difficult to account for the line of conduct which Washington felt himself compelled to adopt. Superior as he was to the slightest emotion of revenge, his mind was ever swayed by the dictates of patriotism and justice; and, as a judge, he repudiated with equal austerity the interference of sensibility and of party spirit. If anything could have warped him from the decision at which an uninterested arbitrator would have arrived, it would have been the letter of Major André, in which, superior to the fear of death, but absorbed by the dread of disgrace, he requested to be executed as a soldier and not as a criminal. This request must, doubtless, have touched a set of feelings in the mind of Washington, of peculiar sensibility. No man

could more tenderly sympathise with these sentiments of the condemned man than the gallant warrior on whose arbitration his fate was suspended, and it was well nigh impossible that he should shake off the influence of these exalted feelings; but it was totally impossible that he should swerve from the line of justice and the sacred dictates of international law. While he owed obedience to the nobler feelings by which he was personally affected, he owed a paramount duty to his country, and supporting himself on the inviolable responsibilities of his office, he signed, with an aching heart, the warrant which consigned the accomplished culprit to the ignominious death of a civil delinquent. Even the detestable Arnold had the audacity to interfere to obtain for his accomplice the treatment of a prisoner of war; but Washington did not even condescend to answer his letters, except by sending his wife and baggage after him to New York.

André walked with composure to the place of execution, between two American officers; but on beholding the gibbet he asked with some emotion, "Must I die in this manner?" They replied, "It is unavoidable!" "I am reconciled to my fate," said he, "but not to this mode; but it will be but a momentary pang." Being asked the moment before his death if he wished to say anything, he said, "Only that you will witness to the world that I die like a brave man."

It has been charged upon Washington, by his enemies, as cruel and vindictive that he executed so severe a sentence upon this misguided and unfortunate man; and perhaps it is not surprising that Englishmen, attributing his crime to excessive zeal in the cause of his country, should pass such a

verdict. But it is somewhat remarkable that the biographers of General Washington should enlarge, as they have done, on the merits of André, and thus lend some colour to this ungrounded accusation. The only just light in which the question can be put appears to be this:—Was the delinquent a spy in the American camp, or should he be regarded merely as a prisoner of war? Between these opinions there can be no medium. If the latter be affirmed no other punishment than that which he suffered is consistent with the practice and the law of nations; and, if the former be true, then the punishment of death was altogether unjust. Upon this point there can surely be but one opinion. Again, much has been said in praise of the character of André; but was it the part of a generous enemy to enter into the treachery of the unprincipled betrayer of his country's cause, and to league himself with a man whose entire character displays the extremes of meanness, audacity, and despotism? It may further be asked whether Washington did not punish with this severity a crime which he would rather have died than commit? Can it be imagined that any possible accession of gain or power would have tempted him to take a similar advantage, even of the relentless enemy against whom he was engaged? If any justice has hitherto been done to his character, the reply may be safely left to the reader.

The history of the American war, so far as relates to General Washington, has been a history of disregarded remonstrances on the part of the Congress; and, in consequence, of perpetual failure on the part of the army. Hence the history of the subject of this memoir, during this important por-

tion of his life, is robbed of that brilliance by which it would have been surrounded had his exertions been crowned with the success which they deserved. "The satisfaction," said he, in a letter to a member of Congress, "which I have in any successes that attend us, even in the alleviation of misfortunes, is always allayed by the fear that they will lull us into security. Supineness, and a disposition to flatter ourselves, seem to make parts of our national character. When we receive a check, and are not quite undone, we are apt to fancy that we have gained a victory; and when we do gain any little advantage, we imagine it decisive, and expect the war immediately to end. The history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary expedients. Would to God they were to end here!"

Impressed with these sentiments he wrote to Congress at considerable length upon the steps which were rendered necessary by the present crisis; and, as the letter is singularly characteristic of the general, and as it produced effects which doubtless contributed to the ultimate success of the war, a considerable portion of it will be given in this place. After commenting upon the sources of supply for the present campaign, he says,—

"But while we are meditating offensive operations, which may either not be undertaken at all, or being undertaken, may fail, I am persuaded Congress are not inattentive to the present state of the army; and will view, in the same light with me, the necessity of providing in time against a period (the 1st of January) when one half of our present force will dissolve. The shadow of an army that will remain will have every motive, except mere patriotism, to abandon the service, without the hope, which has

hitherto supported them, of a change for the better. This is almost extinguished now; and certainly will not outlive the campaign, unless it finds something more substantial to rest upon. This is a truth of which every spectator of the distress of the army cannot fail to be convinced. Those at a distance may speculate differently; but on the spot an opinion to the contrary, judging human nature on the usual scale, would be chimerical. The honourable the committee of Congress, who have seen and heard for themselves, will add their testimony to mine, and the wisdom and justice of Congress cannot fail to give it the most serious attention. To me it will appear miraculous if our affairs can maintain themselves much longer in their present train. If either the temper or the resources of the country will not admit of an alteration, we may expect soon to be reduced to the humiliating condition of seeing the cause of America in America upheld by foreign arms. The generosity of our allies has a claim to all our confidence and all our gratitude; but it is neither for the honour of America, nor for the interest of the common cause, to leave the work entirely to them."

After noticing the resources of Great Britain for the prosecution of the war, he adds:—

"The inference from these reflections is, that we cannot count upon a speedy end to the war, and that it is the true policy of America not to content herself with temporary expedients, but to endeavour, if possible, to give consistency and solidity to our measures. An essential step to this will be, immediately to devise a plan and put it in execution, for providing men in time to replace those who will leave us at the end of the year, and for sub-

sisting and making a reasonable allowance to the officers and soldiers.

"The plan for this purpose ought to be of general operation, and such as will execute itself. Experience has shown that a peremptory draft will be the only effectual one. If a draft for the war, or for three years, can be effected, it ought to be made on every account: a shorter period than a year is inadmissible.

"To one who has been witness to the evils brought upon us by short enlistments, the system appears to be pernicious beyond description, and a crowd of motives present themselves to dictate a change. It may be easily shown that all the misfortunes we have met with in the military line are to be attributed to this cause: had we formed a permanent army in the beginning, which by the continuance of the same men in service would be capable of discipline, we never should have had to retreat with a handful of men across the Delaware in 1776, trembling for the fate of America, which nothing but the infatuation of the enemy could have saved; we should not have remained all the succeeding winter at their mercy, with sometimes scarcely a sufficient body of men to mount the ordinary guard, liable at every moment to be dissipated if they had only thought proper to march against us; we should not have been under the necessity of fighting at Brandywine with an unequal number of raw troops, and afterwards of seeing Philadelphia fall a prey to a victorious army; we should not have been at Valley Forge with less than half the force of the enemy, destitute of everything, in a situation neither to resist or retire; we should not have seen New York left with a handful

of men, yet an over-match for the main army of these states, while the principal part of their forces was detached for the reduction of two of them; we should not have found ourselves this spring so weak as to be insulted by five thousand men, unable to protect our baggage and magazines, their security depending on a good countenance, and a want of enterprise in the enemy; we should not have been the greatest part of the war inferior to the enemy, indebted for our safety to their inactivity, enduring frequently the mortification of seeing inviting opportunities to ruin them pass unimproved, for want of a force which the country was completely able to afford; to see the country ravaged, our towns burnt, the inhabitants plundered, abused, murdered with impunity from the same cause."

The general then states to Congress the distress under which the civil department had suffered from the circumstances of the expense consequent upon short enlistments, and goes on to say:—

"There is every reason to believe the war has been protracted on this account: our opposition being less, made the success of the enemy greater. The fluctuation of the army kept alive their hopes, and at every period of the dissolution of a considerable part of it, they have flattered themselves with some decisive advantages. Had we kept a permanent army on foot, the enemy could have had nothing to hope for, and would, in all probability, have listened to terms long since. If the army is left in its present situation, it must continue an encouragement to the efforts of the enemy; if it is put upon a respectable one, it must have the contrary effect, and nothing, I believe, will tend more to give us peace the ensuing winter.

"It will be an interesting winter. Many circumstances will contribute to a negociation. An army on foot, not only for another campaign, but for several campaigns, would determine the enemy to pacific measures, and enable us to insist upon favourable terms in forcible language. An army insignificant in numbers, dissatisfied, crumbling to pieces, would be the strongest temptation they could have to try the experiment a little longer. It is an old maxim that the surest way to make a good peace is to be well prepared for war.

"I cannot forbear returning in this place to the necessity of a more ample and equal provision for the army. The discontents on this head have been gradually matured to a dangerous extremity. There are many symptoms that alarm and distress me.

"Endeavours are using to unite both officers and men in a general refusal of the money, and some corps now actually decline receiving it. Every method has been taken to counteract it, because such a combination in the army would be a severe blow to our declining currency. The most moderate insist that the accounts of depreciation ought to be liquidated at stated periods, and certificates given by the government for the sums due. They will not be satisfied with a general declaration that it shall be made good.

"I have often said, and I beg leave to repeat it, the half-pay provision is, in my opinion, the most politic and effectual that can be adopted. On the whole, if something satisfactory be not done, the army (already so much reduced in officers by daily resignations as not to have a sufficiency to do the common duties of it), must either

cease to exist at the end of the campaign, or it will exhibit an example of more virtue, fortitude, self-denial, and perseverance than has, perhaps, ever yet been paralleled in the history of human enthusiasm.

"The dissolution of the army is an event that cannot be regarded with indifference. It would bring accumulated distresses upon us; it would throw the people of America into a general consternation, it would discredit our cause throughout the world, it would shock our allies. To think of replacing the officers with others is visionary. The loss of the veteran soldiers could not be repaired. To attempt to carry on the war with militia against disciplined troops, would be to attempt what the common sense and common experience of mankind will pronounce to be impracticable. But I should fail in respect to Congress to dwell on observations of this kind in a letter to them.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

The suggestions contained in this letter obtained the serious consideration of Congress, and some resolutions passed that body in accordance with them. Unfortunately, however, the executive power was much less active than the legislative, and the main provisions of the Congress were rendered nugatory by the feeble hold which they had upon the states.

In the course of the year 1780, a memorial was presented to Congress by the general officers, depicting in an affecting manner the present situation of the army, and praying for some settled support for the present, and some provision for

the future. This memorial was answered by Congress in a communication of which the following remarks may serve as a specimen.

They said "that patience, self-denial, fortitude, and perseverance, and the cheerful sacrifice of time and health are necessary virtues, which both the citizen and the soldier are called to exercise, while struggling for the liberties of their country; and that moderation, frugality, and temperance must be among the chief, as well as the brightest ornaments of that kind of civil government which is wisely instituted by the several states of this union."

Surely such a lecture as this upon the virtue of temperance to men who, half their time, were almost destitute of food and clothing, must be regarded as little better than an insult, and from such conduct on the part of the Congress we learn to consider that they were utterly undeserving of the success which they accidentally obtained, and to attribute to Washington alone the glory of those immortal achievements which conferred on America political independence, with all the blessings of commercial prosperity, and social refinement in its train.

In the summer of 1780, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark entered into the confederacy commonly known as "*the armed neutrality*." At length events occurred between Holland and Great Britain which induced the former power to join that compact. By these events, which precipitated a war between Holland and Great Britain, fresh resources were brought to the cause of America. This again inspired confidence throughout the

nation, and hopes were entertained of the speedy termination of the war.

A considerable number of Dutch vessels trading with France, and laden with materials for ship-building, were seized and carried into British ports, though the existing treaties did not forbid this species of commerce. The Dutch refused to permit any alteration in the existing treaties, and expressed their indignation at the injury they had received. At length the British ambassador was recalled from the Hague, and not a port was left open to Great Britain from Gibraltar to the North Pole.

CHAPTER V.

Events in the Southern Provinces—Alarming Mutinies in the American Army—Undignified Concessions of Congress—Embassy to the Court of France—Political Reforms—Wretched State of the Army exhibited in General Washington's private Journal—Depredations of Lord Cornwallis in Virginia—Noble Letter of General Washington—Loan from France, and subsequent Arrival of a French Fleet and Army—United Attack on Lord Cornwallis in Virginia—His Defeat.

In the latter part of the year 1780, a dawn of better fortune appeared in the southern states. In South Carolina, Major Ferguson, a British officer of considerable eminence, who was co-operating with Lord Cornwallis, was defeated by Colonel Campbell in a severe conflict, which occurred on the 7th of October. In this action one hundred and fifty of Ferguson's party were killed, and about the same number wounded; eight hundred and ten, of whom one hundred were British troops, surrendered themselves prisoners, and fifteen hundred stand of excellent arms were taken; while those under Ferguson's command who escaped, were dispersed through the country and were lost to the royal cause. Could the victorious Americans have pressed their successes, the consequences would probably have proved fatal to the force under Lord Cornwallis; but in this instance, and almost

throughout the American war, the advantages of individual courage were more than counterbalanced by the negligence and want of system and energy which existed in the government. No means of subsistence had been provided for this militia force, and they consequently dispersed and returned to their homes.

About this time, General Gates was removed from the command of the Southern army, and, by the choice of Washington, Major General Greene was appointed to succeed him. Under his command, one of the most successful efforts recorded in the history of the American war was made against the British at a place called the Cow-pens. In a battle which was fought at this place, the British general, Tarleton, was defeated by General Morgan, and a large number of prisoners, together with considerable military stores, were taken, while the Americans suffered the loss of only eighty men in killed and wounded. At length, however, the American forces were driven out of North Carolina, encountering in their retreat the severest hardships from want of food and clothing in the depth of winter; while Lord Cornwallis returned to it with the hope of completing its reduction under the British crown.

Arnold having been appointed a Brigadier-General in the British army, was detached in January, 1781, with sixteen hundred men from New York to pillage and distress the State of Virginia; General Washington was now extremely anxious to send a force to the relief of his native state, and at the same time to bring the treacherous Arnold to the punishment he deserved. For this purpose he seized the moment when the British squadron, by

which the French naval force had been blockaded in the harbour of New Port ever since its arrival, had been considerably injured by a storm, and despatched the Marquess La Fayette to Virginia with twelve hundred of the American infantry; at the same time he requested the assistance of the French from Rhode Island. They gladly acceded to this proposal, and Admiral D'Estanches sailed with the whole squadron for the Chesapeak. Meanwhile, however, the British admiral had repaired the damages sustained by the storm, and followed the French. An action took place between the hostile fleets on the 25th of March, in which the English were so far successful, that the expedition was abandoned.

During the winter of 1780-1, the American army were again subject to very severe privations and sufferings. Want of clothing, scanty and bad food, the suspension of pay, now for nearly twelve months,—these, and similar grievances at length impaired their interest in the service of their country, and an alarming mutiny broke out on the night of the 1st of January. In this mutiny, the whole of the Pennsylvania line stationed at Morristown was engaged. One officer was killed, and several wounded in an attempt to quell it, and at length the insurgents, to the number of thirteen hundred, marched towards Princetown. They declared their sole object to be the redress of those wrongs against which they had now for so long remonstrated in vain. Their sincerity in this declaration was soon put to a most honourable test. The British general having obtained information of this movement, sent agents to invite the malcontents to his standard, offering them much higher

advantages than their government had the power, even had they had the inclination, to propose. These overtures they rejected with the utmost contempt and indignation, and even seized the messengers who brought them, and delivered them over to General Wayne, their commander prior to the mutiny, by whom they were summarily hanged as spies.

A committee of Congress was appointed to treat with those whom their own neglect had forced to desperate measures, and terms were extorted from them by fear which they would never have yielded from any other motive. Some were discharged, some received forty days' furlough, and, for a time, the entire line was absolutely dissolved.

To the great alarm of Congress, this mutinous spirit began to spread. Some of the Jersey brigade at Pompton imitated the example of the Pennsylvania regiments. In the former instance the mutiny had taken place at a distance from the head-quarters of the commander-in-chief, but in the latter case the evil showed itself nearer home, and, as fewer soldiers were engaged in it, Washington determined to reduce them by force to unconditional submission, and thus check an evil, the progress of which would soon place the cause of American independence beyond the reach of hope. General Howe, to whom the service was committed, restored obedience by the promptitude with which he executed two or three of the ringleaders on the spot.

But while these symptomatic paroxysms were subdued, the morbid cause of them remained untouched in the vitals of the political system. The army continued without adequate provision; supplies

were obtained by impressment, while the certificates given on these occasions were reduced to the value of waste paper by the extinction of public credit. All thinking men in America were now agreed as to the causes and the cure of these evils. They perceived that affairs could never be efficiently conducted by thirteen different and independent powers, more especially when, as in this instance, each of these powers had to contend against all the evils of inexperience and ignorance. They, therefore, looked to General Washington as the man in whose hands should be placed a supreme, but not irresponsible, power. They foresaw that this measure, and this alone, could give unity and efficiency to their operations; and they clearly perceived that, of all the thousands of hands which were busy upon one or other department of administration, his was the only one which was formed at such a crisis to direct the resources of war, and to wield the powers of government.

Still the American Congress persevered in that system which had already done so much to destroy the rising cause of freedom; and the spring of 1781 did, indeed, bring with it all the gloom in prospect, and the misery in present condition, which the wisdom of the commander-in-chief had foretold. Congress had made a requisition upon the several states for an army to consist of thirty-seven thousand men. In May, however, only seven thousand infantry were in the field, and the cavalry and artillery at no part of the campaign amounted to a thousand men! Ignominious defeat now seemed unavoidable; the British government, aware of the narrowed resources of their enemy, urged on Sir Henry Clinton to make a grand effort to reduce

the revolted colonies, and any other mind than Washington's would have abandoned the cause in despair.

A single ray of hope alone broke in upon the mind of Washington, from what appeared the only alternative left—a loan from the French government. For negociating this important matter with the French court Congress selected Lieutenant-Colonel Laurens, a gentleman, who from having lived much with the commander-in-chief, had obtained that extensive information which well qualified him for this charge. Before his departure he spent a few days at head-quarters, and received from the general, in the form of a letter, his sentiments on the present state of America. This paper, when it is considered that it was not addressed to Congress, but indirectly to a power to whom it was desirable to present the brightest view of their prospects, assumes a particularly interesting character. It suffices to show the desperate condition to which the American cause was reduced, and, consequently, to reflect still greater honour on the man to whose instrumentality that country principally owes her political existence.

In this document Washington declares that the efforts unavoidably made in the prosecution of the war had greatly exceeded the natural ability of the country, and that it had now become impossible for the United States, by any interior exertions, to extricate themselves from their present difficulties, by restoring public credit, and furnishing the funds necessary for the support of the war.

He remarked that the United States had been compelled to resort to a most unpopular mode of obtaining resources; and that there was reason to

believe that the evils actually felt in the prosecution of the war might weaken those sentiments which began it. And yet so insufficient were the supplies, that from an almost uninterrupted series of complicated distress the patience of the army was now nearly exhausted, and their discontents matured to an extremity which had recently produced very disagreeable consequences, and which demonstrated the absolute necessity of speedy relief;—"a relief," he added, "not within the compass of our means." From these, and similar considerations, he deduced the primary importance of a pecuniary supply for the revival of public credit and the vigour of their future operations.

In the midst of these distressing circumstances, affecting the prosecution of the war, some political reforms were effected of vital importance to the future welfare of the States.

From an ill-judged prejudice, says Judge Marshall against institutions which had been sanctioned by experience, all the great executive duties had hitherto devolved either on the committees of Congress, or on boards consisting of several members. This unwieldy and expensive system had maintained itself against all the efforts of reason and public utility. But the scantiness of the national means at length surmounted the prejudices which had so long prevailed; the several committees and boards yielded to a secretary for foreign affairs, a superintendent of finance, a secretary of war, and a secretary of marine. But so universally defective was the organization of Congress, as an executive body, that the year had far advanced before this measure, the utility of which

was acknowledged, could be carried into complete operation by making all the appointments.

It was about this time that the articles of confederation were agreed to. Much difficulty was experienced in obtaining the ratification of this instrument. Various amendments, in some instances contradictory to each other, were proposed by the States respectively; but they successively yielded to the opinion that a federal compact would be of vast importance in the prosecution of the war. One impediment, however, it was found difficult to remove. Within the chartered limits of several States were immense tracts of vacant territory, which it was supposed would constitute a large fund of future wealth. The States not possessed of that advantage insisted on considering this territory as a joint acquisition, which should be applied to the common benefit. At length this difficulty also was surmounted; and, in February 1781, to the great joy of America, this interesting compact was rendered complete.

Even these changes, beneficial as they were, were slow in affecting the condition of the army or the aspect of the war. On the 1st of May, 1781, we find Washington commencing his military journal, the first entry of which is too important to be omitted in this place. "I begin," he writes, "at this epoch, a concise journal of military transactions, &c. I lament not having attempted it from the commencement of the war, in aid of my memory, and wish the multiplicity of matter which continually surrounds me, and the embarrassed state of our affairs, which is momentarily calling the attention to perplexities of one kind and another,

may not defeat altogether or so interrupt my present intention and plan as to render it of little avail.

"To have the clearer understanding of the entries which may follow it would be proper to recite, in detail, our wants and our prospects; but this alone would be a work of much time and great magnitude. It may suffice to give the sum of them, which I shall do in a few words.

"Instead of having magazines filled with provisions we have a scanty pittance scattered here and there in the different States. Instead of having our arsenals well supplied with military stores they are poorly provided, and the workmen all leaving them. Instead of having the various articles of field equipage in readiness to deliver, the quarter-master general is but now applying to the several States (as a dernier ressort) to provide those things for their troops respectively. Instead of having a regular system of transportation established upon credit, on funds in the quarter-master's hands, to defray the contingent expenses of it, we have neither the one nor the other; and all that business, or a great part of it, being done by military impressment, we are daily and hourly oppressing the people, souring their tempers, and alienating their affections. Instead of having the regiments completed to the new establishment agreeably to the requisition of Congress, scarce any State in the Union has, at this hour, an eighth part of its quota in the field; and there is little prospect, that I can see, of ever getting more than half. In a word, instead of having everything in readiness to take the field, we have nothing; and, instead of having the prospect of a glorious offensive campaign before us, we have a

bewildered and gloomy prospect of a defensive one, unless we should receive a powerful aid of ships, land troops, and money, from our generous allies; and these at present are too contingent to build upon."

In the southern provinces but little success attended the American arms. The Marquis La Fayette, with that zeal and energy for which he was so remarkable, was maintaining, with a small body of men, the appearance of opposition to the superior power of Lord Cornwallis. The principal scene of this contest was Virginia; and between the military force of his lordship, and the malice of the apostate Arnold, this State suffered the most serious privations. The excesses of the invading army in Virginia afforded an opportunity for the development of Washington's magnanimity which cannot be read without admiration. While the British army* overran the country, their ships sailed up the rivers, pillaged the farms, received the negroes who fled from their masters, and, in some instances, reduced the houses to ashes. While they were in the Potomac a flag was sent on shore at Mount Vernon, requiring a supply of fresh provisions. The steward of General Washington believing it to be his duty to save the property of his principal, and entertaining fears for the magnificent buildings of the commander-in-chief, went on board with the flag, carried a supply of fresh provisions, asked the restoration of the slaves who had taken refuge in the fleet, and requested that the buildings and improvements might be spared. Mr. Laud Washington, to whom the general had intrusted the

* Judge Marshall.

management of his estate, immediately communicated these circumstances to him; and, at the same time, informed him that he, too, had sustained considerable losses.

"I am sorry," said the general in reply, "to hear of your loss—I am a little sorry to hear of my own. But that which gives me most concern is, that you should have gone on board the vessels of the enemy, and furnished them with refreshments. It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard, that in consequence of your non-compliance with their request they had burnt my house and laid the plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative; and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them, with a view to prevent a conflagration."

It is not only in the public conduct and military energy of General Washington, that we perceive the depth and intensity of his patriotic feeling. In this little episode of private history we see developed an almost fastidious integrity, united with an honest pride and a nice and delicate sense of honour; and they give to it the lustre of a gem, amidst the sombre records of this singular crisis.

The time, however, was now come, when the despondency and apprehension, which lowered upon the minds of the American people, were to be relieved by one of the most promising events of the war. Whilst General Washington was pondering with a heavy heart the complicated embarrassments of his situation, and the gloomy prospects of his country, he received the grateful intelligence that the government of France had lent the

United States six millions of livres; a part of which sum was advanced in arms and clothing for the army, and a part payable to the drafts of the commander-in-chief. Information was at the same time conveyed, that this government had resolved to employ a respectable fleet in the American seas the next summer.

Immediately, together with the sinew of war, the spirit of mental enterprise was restored, and an attack upon New York was planned by Washington and the French commanders. The near prospect of terminating the war incited the States to fresh efforts, and Washington was not slow in improving this disposition by writing to the executives of the different States, earnestly calling for their quotas of troops and provision.

In June, the French troops marched from New Port to the head-quarters of the American army. Upon information of their approach Washington laid a plan to surprise the British works at Kingsbridge. On the night of the 2nd of July, the plan was to be carried into execution, and, to secure the co-operation of the Count Rochambeau, the commander-in-chief sent an aide to him, requesting him to direct his route to Kingsbridge, and to regulate his march so as to be at that place by the appointed time.

To allay the suspicion which the British commander might entertain upon this movement of the American army, General Washington stated in his orders of June 30th, that a junction with the French troops might soon be expected, and subsequently mentioned, that the French army would not come to that ground, and as the general was desirous of showing all the respect in his power to

those generous allies who were hastening with the zeal of friends, and the ardour of soldiers, to share the fatigues and dangers of the campaign, he proposed to receive them at some more convenient place; and, for this purpose, would march the whole line of the American army at three in the morning.

General Lincoln was appointed to command the detachment which was to assail the works at Kingsbridge, and on the night of July 1st he embarked in boats at Teller's Point, and with muffled oars passed undiscovered to Dobb's Ferry. Here his boats and men were concealed. He reconnoitred the works to be attacked, and found that a British detachment had returned from New Jersey, and was encamped in force at the north end of York Island, and that an armed ship was so stationed in the river as to render it impossible for the American boats to reach the landing-place without discovery. The attempt, therefore, was abandoned.

General Washington's orders included an enterprise to be carried into effect should the attempt on Kingsbridge fail, namely, to bear off a corps of emigrants posted above the British commanded by Colonel Delancy. The execution of this plan was intrusted to the French, and General Lincoln was directed to take a position which should cut off the retreat of Delancy, and protect the flanks of the French from the British reinforcements from the Island. The French troops, however, were too late at the scene of action, and this attempt also failed.

At day-light a skirmish took place between General Lincoln and a party of British light troops, who retreated to York Island as General Washington approached, who had moved the army

to support his detachments. On the 6th of July, Count Rochambeau joined the American army at Dobb's Ferry.

Early in August, General Washington was informed by Count de Barras, the commander of the French fleet at Rhode Island, that Count de Grasse was to have sailed from the West Indies on the 3rd of that month with twenty-five ships of the line, and three thousand troops. It became, therefore, necessary to arrange at once the plan of operation. A number of reasons conspired to divert the allies from the siege of New York, and the General, who had long been anxious to relieve his native province, determined to march in person at once to Virginia, and to lay siege to the post of Lord Cornwallis at York Town. An intercepted letter had communicated to the British his former designs against New York; and the impressions thus produced he studiously promoted by feigned preparations for an encampment opposite Staten Island, and by the route which he struck out for the army. By these stratagems the enemy were completely deceived, and, before they discovered their error, the allied army had passed the Delaware, and were beyond the reach of annoyance.

On arriving at Chester, Washington received the important intelligence that the Count de Grasse had arrived with his fleet in the Chesapeak, and that the Marquis St. Simon had, with a body of three thousand, joined the Marquess La Fayette. The commander-in-chief reached Williamsburgh on the 14th of September, and immediately went on board the Ville de Paris to settle with the Count the plan of operation. On the 25th, preparations were made to besiege York Town.

The rivers York and James form a long and narrow peninsula; and Lord Cornwallis had chosen a position on the south side of York River as a military post, and strongly fortified it. Opposite to York Town, on the north side, is Gloucester Point, which projects into the river, and at this place reduces its width one mile. This point his lordship also possessed and fortified. Between these posts the river is deep, and ships of the line may here ride in safety. The communication between York Town and Gloucester Point was defended by batteries on shore, and by several armed ships in the river. The body of the British army was encamped about York Town, within a range of redoubts and field works, erected to command the peninsula, which, at this place, is not more than eight miles wide, and to impede the approach of an assaulting enemy. Colonel Tarleton, with six or seven hundred men, defended Gloucester. On the 28th, the main body of the allied army moved down towards York Town, driving before them troops of horse and the pickets of the enemy. The columns, as they reached the ground assigned them, encamped for the night, and lay upon their arms. The next day was employed in reconnoitring the enemy's position, in which office Colonel Scammel, an officer of merit, was mortally wounded, and taken prisoner. A force, consisting of about two thousand French and Americans, under the command of the French general De Choise, was stationed on the north side of the river to watch and restrain the enemy in Gloucester. The French and Americans were employed until the 6th of October in conveying their artillery and stores from the landing-place to

camp. On the night of that day they broke ground within six hundred yards of the British lines, and the first parallel was completed with little loss. On the 9th and 10th, guns were mounted on the works, and the batteries began to play with visible effect on the lines of the enemy. Many of their guns were soon silenced, and their works damaged. By the 11th, the enemy scarcely returned a shot. The shells and red-hot balls of the besiegers reached the British shipping in the river, and set the Charon frigate, of forty-four guns, and several large transports on fire, which were entirely consumed. A spirit of emulation fired the troops of both nations, and the siege was prosecuted with vigour and effect. On the night of the 11th, the second parallel was begun within three hundred yards of the British lines. The working parties were not discovered until day-light, when the trenches were in a situation to cover the men. Three days were spent in completing the batteries of this parallel, which time the British indefatigably employed upon their lines. They opened new embrasures, and their fire was more destructive than at any previous period of the siege. Two redoubts, in particular, advanced in front of the British lines, and which flanked the second parallel of the Americans, gave great annoyance, and it was deemed necessary to take them by storm. To prevent national jealousy, and to keep alive the spirit of emulation, the attack on the one was assigned to the American troops, and that of the other to the French. The Marquess La Fayette commanded the American detachment, consisting of light infantry, which was designed to act against the redoubt near the river, and the Baron de Viominel

Visminet, with the grenadiers and chasseurs of his nation, was ordered to storm the redoubt nearer to the British right. Colonel Hamilton, who through this campaign commanded a battalion of light infantry, led the advanced corps of the Americans to the assault, while Colonel Laurens turned the redoubt and attacked in the rear, to prevent the retreat of the garrison. Without giving time for the abattis to be removed, and without firing a gun, the Americans gallantly assaulted and instantly carried the works. Their loss was one sergeant and eight privates killed, and six officers and twenty-six rank and file wounded. The garrison was commanded by a major, and consisted of about fifty men. Of these, eight privates were killed, a few individuals escaped, and the rest were made prisoners *.

The redoubt attacked by the French was garrisoned by one hundred and twenty men, it made more resistance, and was overcome at the loss of about one hundred men. Of the garrison, eighteen were killed, and three officers and about forty privates were made prisoners.

* This event took place soon after the wanton slaughter of the prisoners confined in Fort Griswold, in Connecticut, by the British. No similar cruelties, however, were practised by the Americans; not a man was killed, except in action. Mr. Gordon, in his history of the American war, states the orders given by La Fayette, with the approbation of Washington, to have directed that every man in the redoubt, after the surrender, should be put to the sword. These sanguinary orders, so repugnant to the character of the commander-in-chief and of La Fayette, were never given. There is no trace of them among the papers of General Washington, and Colonel Hamilton, who took a part in the enterprise, which assures his perfect knowledge of every material occurrence, has publicly contradicted the statement.—*Judge Marshall.*

The commander-in-chief was much pleased with the gallantry of the attacking troops on this occasion. In general orders, he congratulated the army on the success of the enterprise, and thanked the troops for their cool and intrepid conduct. "The general reflects," conclude the orders, "with the highest degree of pleasure on the confidence which the troops of the two nations must hereafter have in each other. Assured of mutual support, he is convinced there is no danger which they will not cheerfully encounter, no difficulty which they will not bravely overcome." The redoubts were the same night included within the second parallel.

Lord Cornwallis well knew that the fire of the second parallel would soon render his works untenable, and he determined to attempt to destroy it. The sortie appointed for this service consisted of three hundred and fifty men, and was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Abercromby. He attacked two batteries, which were most forward, with great impetuosity and carried them; but, the guards from the trenches advancing, he was compelled to retreat without having effected his purpose. A few pieces of cannon were hastily spiked, but were soon rendered fit for use.

By the afternoon of the 16th October, the British works sunk under the fire of the batteries of the second parallel: in the whole front attacked they could not show a single gun, and their shells were nearly expended. In this extremity, his lordship adopted the desperate resolution to attempt an escape. Leaving the sick and wounded in his posts, he determined, with his efficient force, to cross over to Gloucester, disperse the troops under De Choise, mount his troops on horses that might

be found in the country, direct his course to the fords of the great rivers, and make his way to New York. For this purpose, boats were collected, and other necessary measures taken. On the night of the 16th, the first embarkation arrived in safety at Gloucester; but while the boats were returning a violent storm arose and forced them down the river. At day-light the storm subsided, and the boats were sent to bring back the soldiers to York Town, which was accomplished with little loss.

On the morning of the 17th, the fire of the American batteries became intolerable, and soon rendered the British post untenable. Lord Cornwallis perceiving further resistance to be unavailing, beat a parley, and proposed a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, that commissioners might meet and arrange the terms on which the posts of York and Gloucester should be surrendered. General Washington, in reply, declared his "ardent desire to spare the effusion of blood, and his readiness to listen to such terms as were admissible;" but, to prevent loss of time, he desired "that previous to the meeting of the commissioners the proposals of his lordship might be transmitted in writing, for which purpose a suspension of hostilities for two hours should be granted." The terms proposed by his lordship led the general to suppose that articles of capitulation might easily be adjusted, and he continued the cessation of hostilities till the next day. To expedite the business, he summarily stated the terms he was willing to grant, and informed Earl Cornwallis that if he admitted these as the basis of a treaty, commissioners might meet to put them into form. Accordingly, Viscount de Noailles, and Lieutenant

Colonel Laurens on the part of the allies, and Colonel Dundas and Major Ross on the part of the British, met the next day, and adjusted articles of capitulation which were to be submitted to the consideration of the British general. Resolving not to expose himself to any accident arising from unnecessary delay, General Washington ordered the rough draught of the commissioners to be fairly transcribed and sent to Lord Cornwallis next morning, with a letter expressing his expectation that the garrison would march out by two o'clock in the afternoon, and his lordship, hopeless of more favourable terms, signed the capitulation, and surrendered the posts of York and Gloucester, with their garrisons, to General Washington; and the shipping in the harbour, with the seamen, to Count de Grasse.

The prisoners, exclusive of seamen, amounted to more than seven thousand, of which between four and five thousand were fit for duty. The garrison lost during the siege six officers and five hundred and forty-eight privates in killed and wounded. The privates, with a competent number of officers, were to remain in Virginia, Maryland, or Pennsylvania. The officers not required for this service were permitted on parole to return to Europe, or to any of the maritime posts of the English on the American continent. Lord Cornwallis attempted to introduce into the treaty an article in favour of those Americans who had joined his standard, but General Washington referred their case to the civil authority. Permission, however, was granted to his lordship to send the Bonetta sloop of war unsearched to New York to carry his despatches to Sir Henry Clinton, and

in her those Americans went who had incurred in the highest degree the resentment of their countrymen. The terms granted to Earl Cornwallis were in general those which had been granted to the Americans at the surrender of Charleston, and General Lincoln, who on that occasion resigned his sword to Cornwallis, was appointed to receive the submission of the royal army.

CHAPTER VI.

Affairs in the Southern Provinces—Successes of General Greene—Efforts of Washington to provide for the next Campaign—State of Public Opinion in England; its advance indicated by Parliamentary Divisions—Violent Opposition of Mr. Fox to the Ministry—Change of Administration—Consequent Precautions of General Washington—Increasing Disaffection in the Army.

THE capture of Lord Cornwallis's army, which had long inspired terror in the southern provinces, diffused universal joy over America. The thanks of Congress were given in the strongest terms to General Washington and the French commanders for this brilliant achievement. Appropriate presents were made to both, and addresses of the most flattering kind poured in upon the commander-in-chief from the governments of the several states, as well as from numerous corporations and literary institutions. Washington determined to mark these great successes by some still more impressive observances. Accordingly, the day after the capitulation, he ordered that divine service should be performed on the morrow, in the different brigades and divisions. The order then proceeds in the following words:—

"The commander-in-chief recommends that all the troops that are not upon duty do assist at it with a serious deportment, and that sensibility of heart which the recollection of the surprising and

particular interposition of Providence in our favour claims."

Nor were the Congress backward to recognize an over-ruling Providence in these auspicious events. Immediately on receiving the intelligence they resolved to go in procession to the Dutch Lutheran church, to return thanks, and further recommended to the whole nation to set apart the 13th of December for the same solemn purpose.

In South Carolina and Georgia, the American arms, while they met with considerable success, performed nothing so decisive as was effected at the same time by the allied army. In these states the British had a strong hold, in consequence both of the line of fortified posts which they possessed reaching from Charlestown to Augusta, in Georgia, and also of the disaffection and *toryism* of the majority of the inhabitants. Generals Greene, Lee, Sumpter, and Marion, with about eighteen hundred men, formed the resolution of re-annexing the states thus occupied to the American union. Forts were successively besieged with various success, and battles fought, in which victory invariably declared on the side of the British; but, perhaps, in no scene of the American war did the ill-appointed and ill-fed continental troops evince more determined bravery. The result of the campaign which, from divisions of party among the inhabitants, was almost a war of extermination, was the confinement of the British power in the south to the sea-coast. In this as in many other parts of the war, the talents and courage displayed by the American generals and troops, cannot but be underrated by the superficial reader. They contain few events comparable in importance to

those which enliven the pages of other histories; the numbers engaged were small—their success indecisive—and their sufferings such as, while they rendered the continuance of an army a perpetual wonder, cannot be appreciated, because they cannot be depicted in detail by the annalist.

Thus it is difficult to estimate fully the merits of General Greene in this campaign. He found the country completely conquered and kept in protected subordination by an army which he calculated at four thousand. At no time did his troops amount to two thousand, and of these a considerable number were undisciplined and new to the service. Yet, by a course of judicious management and daring enterprise, he recovered the Southern States, and re-established civil government. A just portion, says Judge Marshall, of the praise deserved by these achievements, is unquestionably due to the troops he commanded. They bore every hardship and privation with a patience and constancy which cannot be sufficiently admired. And never was a general better supported by his inferior officers than Greene. Unencumbered with those who, destitute of military talents, had been appointed by political interest to stations of rank, his orders were executed by young men of equal spirit and intelligence, formed under the eye of Washington himself, and trained by the severe service of the north to all the hardships of war.

It has already been noticed as a prevalent foible of the American people, that they made every success a ground for the relaxation of exertion, and an argument that the war was speedily drawing to a close. This tendency it was now the parti-

cular desire of the commander-in-chief to counteract. In a letter to General Greene, written from Mount Vernon, to which he had escaped for a time from the fatigues of the field, he says,—

"I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is lest, viewing this stroke in a point of light which may too much magnify its importance, they may think our work too nearly closed, and fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent this error, I shall employ every means in my power, and if, unhappily, we sink into this fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

With this view he arrived at Philadelphia on the 27th of November, 1781, and had an audience of Congress. He subsequently attended the committee for making the necessary arrangements for the campaign of 1782, and by the 10th of December those arrangements were concluded; after which the general wrote a circular letter to the governments of the different states, urging them to a prompt compliance with the requisitions of the Congress.

Meanwhile, in England, public opinion had sustained and was daily undergoing an important revolution. Many who at the commencement of the contest had promoted it honestly, and on constitutional grounds, had become enlightened by the free and full discussion of the question which the intervening years had witnessed; many who, from motives of avarice and commercial interest, had taken the same side in the dispute, had been

taught wisdom by a succession of failures and losses; in fact, by their exclusion from those ports which were formerly the great markets of British trade. No party remained entirely unshaken but the miserable rabble in the House of Commons, who were dragged blindfold at the heels of the minister. Even these diminished in number and relaxed in vigour; becoming more and more confined to the dull nominees of the aristocracy, whose silent votes remained unaltered while public opinion advanced; the ostensible representatives of decayed towns, "whose streets," as Mr. Burke humorously remarked "could only be traced by the colour of the corn, and whose sole manufacture was in members of parliament."

This change of opinion may be clearly perceived from the gradually decreasing majorities in the Commons, who supported the schemes of the administration. But eight years ago the Boston Port Bill had passed without a division upon the clauses against which Mr. Fox took exception. In the debate on the Repeal of the American Tea Duty (in 1774), the liberal minority amounted only to forty-nine; on the Massachusett's Bay Bill, to sixty-four; in the debate on the reference of papers relative to the disturbances in America, to a committee (1775), eighty-one; on the reference of the same papers to a committee of the whole house, eighty-nine; on the address to the king on the subject of the American disturbances, one hundred and five; on the amendment on the address in answer to the king's speech, one hundred and eight; on Lord John Cavendish's motion for revising the laws against the Americans (1776), forty-seven against one hundred and nine; on

Mr. Fox's motion for an inquiry into the state of the nation, the liberal minority reached one half; on Mr. Fox's motion that no more of the old corps be sent out of the kingdom (1778), one hundred and sixty-five against two hundred and fifty-nine; on the inquiry into the conduct of the American war, one hundred and fifty-eight against one hundred and eighty; on Mr. Fox's motion on the mismanagement in the conduct of the navy (1782), two hundred and seventeen against two hundred and thirty-six; and at length, on General Conway's motion, in the same year, for putting an end to the American war, the majority decreased to one, the numbers being one hundred and ninety-three against one hundred and ninety-four.

This statement seems to indicate in a curious manner the progressive enlightenment of the public mind during the eight years which were crowded with the calamities of the American war. That it was a beneficial and enlightened change may be assumed from the fact, that now, after half a century of unexampled progress in general intelligence and political knowledge, the principles on which the war was conducted by Great Britain, have become comparatively obsolete, and the conduct to which they led is regarded with still more general reprobation.

Before passing on to the conclusion of this memorable struggle, it will be desirable to give some attention to the conduct of the dispute in England, and thus to show the relation in which the two countries now stood, and the steps by which the parent state was led to resign its pretensions to authority over the colonies.

On the 12th of June, 1781, the House of Com-

mons was agitated by a long and most important debate upon a motion of Mr. Fox, "That this house will resolve itself into a committee of the whole house, to take into consideration the present state of the American war;" after making which he intimated his intention of moving in the committee, should it be appointed, a resolution—"That his majesty's ministers ought immediately to take every possible measure for concluding peace with our American colonies." The arguments urged on both sides in this debate clearly showed that the experience of the last seven years had not been without its effect on both parties; and in the close of his reply Mr. Fox urged, with his accustomed eloquence, a line of argument drawn from their calamitous and humiliating events:—

"I was over in Paris," said he, "just at the eve of this very war; and Dr. Franklin honoured me with his intimacy. I remember one day conversing with him upon the subject, and predicting the fatal consequences. He compared the principle of the war and its probable effects to the ancient crusades. He foretold that our best blood and treasure would be squandered and thrown away to no manner of purpose; that, like the holy war, while we carried ruin and destruction into America, we should impoverish and depopulate Britain; and while we went thither under the pretence of conferring temporal, not ghostly benefits upon the vanquished, our concealed purpose was to destroy, enslave, or oppress, as it promised best to answer our ends; while, like the pretended martyrs, or zealots, in ancient times, we concealed under this fair semblance every vice and passion which constituted human depravity or human turpitude,—avarice,

revenge, ambition, and base as well as impotent resentment. But if that was the opinion of that great philosopher in 1776, how much stronger would the comparison hold at present. Like the crusaders in the holy war, who went to fight for the sepulchre of our Saviour, and to possess Palestine, in order to have the honour of guarding the sepulchre, though the body had been translated to another place for many centuries, the present ministers, treading in the footsteps of those bloody and ruthless zealots, still continued to contend for the possession of an empty sepulchre. They had relinquished taxation, they had given up legislation, they had even offered to pay the debts of the Americans, and, instead of giving them laws, of receiving laws* from them, and yet this land was to be made the scene of a holy war, because at a former period they had told parliament and the nation that they would tax and make laws for America."

Again, in the debate on the address of thanks, in the same year, Mr. Fox was still more vehement in his reprobation, "I trust," said he, "that ministers will not only hear of their measures here, but that, by the aroused indignation and vengeance of an injured and undone people, they will hear of them at the tribunal of justice, and expiate them on the public scaffold. It is my opinion that the day is fast approaching—is near at hand, when the public will no longer submit, nor the ministry escape. Their conduct is unprecedented in any age or in any history. It beggars the records of nations; for in all the annals of kingdoms ruined

* Mr. Fox alluded to the offer made by the Commissioners to permit deputies from the provincial assemblies to sit and vote in the British House of Commons.

by weakness, or ruined by treachery, there is not an instance, so glaring as the present, of a country ruined by a set of men without the confidence, the love, or the opinion of the people, who yet remain secure amidst the storms of public disaster."

On the 27th of February, General Conway moved in the House of Commons, "That it is the opinion of this house that the further prosecution of offensive war against America would, under present circumstances, be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her European enemies, and tend to increase the mutual enmity so fatal to the interests of Great Britain and America." The whole force of administration was exerted to get rid of this question, but in vain; the resolution was carried. An address to the king in the words of the motion was immediately voted, and was presented by the whole house. The answer of the crown was as follows:—

"Gentlemen of the House of Commons—There are no objects nearer to my heart than the ease, happiness, and prosperity of my people; you may be assured that in pursuance of your advice I shall take such measures as shall appear to me to be most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies, so essential to the prosperity of both, and that my efforts shall be directed in the most effectual manner against our European enemies, until such a peace can be obtained as shall consist with the interest and permanent welfare of my kingdom."

This reply being deemed inexplicit, General Conway again rose, on March 4th, to move—"That after the solemn declaration of the opinion of this house, in their humble address presented to his

majesty on Friday last, and his majesty's assurance of his gracious intention, in pursuance of their advice, to take such measures as shall appear to his majesty to be most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies, so essential to the prosperity of both, this house will consider as enemies to his majesty and this country all those who shall attempt to frustrate his majesty's paternal care for the ease and happiness of his people, by advising or by any means attempting the further prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North America, for the purpose of reducing the revolted colonies to obedience by force." This motion was agreed to without a division.

After repeated motions, the object of which was to pass a vote of censure on ministers, and to declare the withdrawal from them of the confidence of parliament, Lord North rose in his place on the 20th of March, 1782, and announced that he and his colleagues no longer held the seals of office. They were succeeded by the Rockingham administration, —a cabinet and government composed of the men who had long been the most powerful advocates of the American claims, among whom were Mr. Burke, Barré, Fox, Conway, and Sheridan.

While the commander-in-chief was busily engaged in writing to the governors of the separate provinces, he received intelligence of the parliamentary debates, which led to these changes, and, alarmed at the effects which they were calculated to produce in America, he introduced his sentiments on the subject into the letters he was writing in the following terms :—

"I have perused these debates," said he, "with

great attention and care, with a view, if possible, to penetrate their real design; and, upon the most mature deliberation I can bestow, I am obliged to declare it as my candid opinion, that the measure in all its views, so far as respects America, is merely delusory, having no serious intention to admit our independence upon its true principles, but is calculated to produce a change of ministers to quiet the minds of their own people and reconcile them to the continuance of the war, while it is meant to amuse this country with a false idea of peace, to draw us from our connection with France, and to lull us into a state of security and inactivity, which taking place, the ministry will be left to prosecute the war in other parts of the world with greater vigour and effect. Your excellency will permit me on this occasion to observe, that even if the nation and parliament are really in earnest to obtain peace with America, it will undoubtedly be wisdom in us to meet them with great caution and circumspection, and by all means to keep our arms firm in our hands, and, instead of relaxing one iota in our exertions, rather to spring forward with redoubled vigour, that we may take the advantage of every favourable opportunity until our wishes are fully obtained. No nation yet suffered in treaty by preparing (even in the moment of negociation) most vigorously for the field. The industry which the enemy are using to propagate their pacific reports, appears to me a circumstance very suspicious; and the eagerness with which the people, as I am informed, are catching at them, is, in my opinion, equally dangerous."

The next subject of concern to Washington was

the condition and temper of the army, especially owing to a measure then in contemplation for the reduction of the army, and the consequent discharge of a number of officers. In a letter to the secretary at war, he declares his conviction that they would gladly retire to a situation as favourable as they had left to join the army: "Yet," said he, "I cannot help fearing the result of the measure when I see such a number of men goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past, and of anticipation of the future, about to be turned into the world; soured by penury and what they call the ingratitude of the public, involved in debts without one farthing of money to carry them home, after having spent the flower of their days, and many of them their patrimonies, in establishing the freedom and independence of their country, and having suffered every thing which human nature is capable of enduring on this side death. I repeat it, when I reflect on these irritable circumstances unattended by one thing to soothe their feelings or brighten the gloomy prospect, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow of a very serious and distressing nature.

"I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture so far as the real life would justify me in doing, or I would give anecdotes of patriotism and distress, which have scarcely ever been paralleled, never surpassed, in the history of mankind. But you may rely upon it, the patience and long suffering of this army are nearly exhausted, and there never was so great a spirit of discontent as at this instant.

"While in the field, I think it may be kept from breaking out into acts of outrage; but when

we retire into winter quarters, unless the storm be previously dissipated, I cannot be at ease respecting the consequences. It is high time for a peace."

To account for this disposition in the army, it is only necessary to recollect that the resolution of 1780, which granted half-pay for life to officers, stood merely on the faith of a government destitute of funds. The remuneration of these veteran servants could only be procured by requisitions upon sovereign states, and if their claims were so utterly disregarded during the imminent dangers of the war, they might well conclude that their hopes would be slender indeed after the conclusion of a peace.

CHAPTER VII.

Negociations between the Allied Powers preparatory to a Peace —Conclusion of preliminary Articles of Peace between Great Britain, France, and Spain—Excitement in the Army—Inflammatory Addresses—Meeting of Officers—Address of General Washington—Resolutions of the Meeting.

HITHERTO, we have seen the alliance of America with France and Spain result in those successes which are the ordinary effects of vigorous and harmonious co-operation. But as the time for negociation drew near, it was apparent that great caution must be used to adjust some interests which were not entirely common to the allies. The French continued the war from very different motives from those which actuated the Americans: the latter were contending for liberty, and were stimulated by great principles in every effort which they made. But it is not too much to say that the French government at this time were absolutely incapable of sympathising with such sentiments. The only common ground between them was hostility to Great Britain, and even that was but a temporary and accidental feeling with the colonists, while with their French allies it was as unchangeable and permanent as the natural causes from which it sprang. Then again, the boundaries which should be assigned to the United States, and the participation of their colonial neighbours in

the fisheries, were points difficult of adjustment. After, however, an intricate negociation, in which the American commissioners displayed a degree of sagacity and firmness worthy of more veteran diplomatists, eventual and preliminary articles were signed on the 30th of November, 1782. After this all parties entered with perfect good faith into the subsequent negociations, and preliminary articles of peace were signed between Great Britain, France, and Spain on the 20th of January, 1783.

Meanwhile, the disaffection and uneasiness of the army increased as fresh evidence appeared of the inability and unwillingness of Congress to fulfil their engagements. Soon after going into winter quarters in December, 1782, they presented a petition to that body respecting the money actually due to them, and requested an immediate payment in commutation of the half-pay stipulated by the resolutions of October, 1780. They also appointed a committee to watch the progress of this petition, and to promote in Congress the interests of their constituents.

Early in March, 1783, this committee communicated to the army that their objects had not been obtained, and the consequent irritation of the army was increased almost to desperation by the general conviction, that the commander-in-chief was restrained by extreme delicacy from giving his own opinions upon the point to Congress. On the 10th of the same month, an anonymous paper was circulated, requesting a meeting of the general and field officers the next morning, "to consider the late letter from their representatives in Philadelphia, and what measures, if any, should be adopted to

obtain that redress of grievances which they had solicited." On the same day, an address to the army was circulated, calculated by its eloquence and inflammatory character to give increased vehemence to their resentments, and their consequent measures. This document was as follows:—

"TO THE OFFICERS OF THE ARMY."

"GENTLEMEN,

"A fellow soldier, whose interest and affections bind him strongly to you, whose past sufferings have been as great, and whose future fortune may be as desperate as yours, would beg leave to address you.

"Age has its claims, and rank is not without its pretensions to advise; but, though unsupported by both, he flatters himself, that the plain language of sincerity and experience will neither be unheard nor unregarded.

"Like many of you, he loved private life, and left it with regret: he left it, determined to retire from the field with the necessity that called him to it, and not until then—not until the enemies of his country, the slaves of power, and the hirelings of injustice, were compelled to abandon their schemes, and acknowledge America as terrible in arms, as she had been humble in remonstrance. With this object in view, he has long shared in your toils, and mingled in your dangers. He has felt the cold hand of poverty without a murmur, and has seen the insolence of wealth without a sigh; but, too much under the direction of his wishes, and sometimes weak enough to mistake desire for opinion, he has until lately, very lately,

believed in the justice of his country. He hoped, that as the clouds of adversity scattered, and as the sunshine of peace and better fortune broke in upon us, the coldness and severity of government would relax, and that more than justice, that gratitude, would blaze forth upon those hands which had upheld her in the darkest stages of her passage from impending servitude to acknowledged independence. But faith has its limits as well as temper, and there are points beyond which neither can be stretched without sinking into cowardice, or plunging into credulity. This, my friends, I conceive to be your situation. Hurried to the very verge of both, another step would ruin you for ever. To be tame and unprovoked when injuries press hard upon you, is more than weakness; but to look up for kinder usage, without one manly effort of your own, would fix your character, and show the world how richly you deserve those chains you broke. To guard against this evil, let us take a review of the ground upon which we now stand, and from thence carry our thoughts forward for a moment into the unexplored field of expedient.

"After a pursuit of seven long years, the object for which we set out is at length brought within our reach. Yes, my friends, that suffering courage of yours was active once; it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and a bloody war. It has placed her in the chair of independency, and peace returns again to bless—Whom? A country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services? A country courting your return to private life with tears of gratitude and smiles of admiration,

longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, and those riches which your wounds have preserved? Is this the case? Or is it rather a country that tramples upon your rights, disdains your cries, and insults your distresses? Have you not more than once suggested your wishes, and made known your wants to Congress?—wants and wishes which gratitude and policy should have anticipated rather than evaded; and have you not lately, in the meek language of entreating memorials, begged from their justice what you could no longer expect from their favour? How have you been answered? Let the letter which you are called to consider to-morrow reply.

"If this then be your treatment, while the swords you wear are necessary for the defence of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division? When those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this revolution, and retiring from the field grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honour? If you can—go—and carry with you the jest of tories and the scorn of whigs, the ridicule, and, what is worse, the pity, of the world. Go, starve, and be forgotten! But if your spirit should revolt at this; if you have sense enough to discover, and spirit enough to oppose, tyranny under whatever garb it may

assume, whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty; if you have not yet learned to discriminate between a people and a cause, between men and principles, awake, attend to your situation, and redress yourselves. If the present moment be lost, every future effort is in vain, and your threats then will be as empty as your entreaties now.

"I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion upon what you can bear and what you will suffer. If your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeal from the justice to the fears of government. Change the milk-and-water style of your last memorial; assume a bolder tone; decent, but lively, spirited and determined, and suspect the man who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance. Let two or three men, who can feel as well as write, be appointed to draw up your *last remonstrance;* for I would no longer give it the suing, soft, unsuccessful epithet of memorial. Let it be represented in language that will neither dishonour you by its rudeness, nor betray you by its fears, what has been promised by Congress, and what has been performed—how long and how patiently you have suffered, how little you have asked, and how much of that little has been denied. Tell them, that though you were the first, and would wish to be the last, to encounter danger, though despair itself can never drive you into dishonour, it may drive you from the field; that the wound often irritated, and never healed, may at length become incurable; and that the slightest mark of indignity from Congress must now operate like the grave, and part you for ever. That in any political

event the army has its alternative. If peace, that nothing shall separate you from your arms but death; if war, that courting the auspices, and inviting the direction, of your illustrious leader, you will retire to some unsettled country, smile in your turn, and mock when their fear cometh on. But let it represent also, that should they comply with the request of your late memorial it would make you more happy, and them more respectable. That while war should continue you would follow their standard into the field, and when it came to an end you would withdraw into the shade of private life, and give the world another subject of wonder and applause—an army victorious over its enemies, victorious over itself."

These measures General Washington lost no time in noticing in general orders. He expressed the strongest disapprobation of proceedings so contrary to military duty, but still requested that they would meet the next day to hear the Report of their committee, and to devise "what further measures ought to be adopted as most rational and best calculated to obtain the just and important objects in view." The next day the officers met agreeably to orders, and General Gates, as senior officer, took the chair. General Washington then entered the assembly and addressed them as follows:—

"GENTLEMEN,

"By an anonymous summons an attempt has been made to convene you together. How inconsistent with the rules of propriety, how unmi-

litary, and how subversive of all order and discipline, let the good sense of the army decide.

"In the moment of this summons, another anonymous production was sent into circulation, addressed more to the feelings and passions than to the judgment of the army. The author of the piece is entitled to much credit for the goodness of his pen; and I could wish he had as much credit for the rectitude of his heart; for, as men see through different optics, and are induced by the reflecting faculties of the mind to use different means to attain the same end, the author of the address should have had more charity than to mark for suspicion the man who should recommend moderation and longer forbearance; or, in other words, who should not think as he thinks, and act as he advises. But he had another plan in view, in which candour and liberality of sentiment, regard to justice and love of country, have no part; and he was right to insinuate the darkest suspicion to effect the blackest design. That the address was drawn with great art, and is designed to answer the most insidious purposes; that it is calculated to impress the mind with an idea of premeditated injustice in the sovereign power of the United States, and rouse all those resentments which must unavoidably flow from such a belief; that the secret mover of this scheme, whoever he may be, intended to take advantage of the passions, while they were warmed by the recollection of past distresses, without giving time for cool deliberate thinking, and that composure of mind which is so necessary to give dignity and stability to measures, is rendered too obvious by the mode

of conducting the business, to need other proof than a reference to the proceedings.

"Thus much, Gentlemen, I have thought it incumbent on me to observe to you, to show upon what principles I opposed the irregular and hasty meeting which was proposed to have been held on Tuesday last, and not because I wanted a disposition to give you every opportunity, consistent with your own honour and the dignity of the army, to make known your own grievances. If my conduct hitherto has not evinced to you that I have been a faithful friend to the army, my declaration of it at this time would be equally unavailing and improper. But as I was among the first who embarked in the cause of our common country; as I have never left your side one moment, but when called from you on public duty; as I have been the constant companion and witness of your distresses, and not among the last to feel and acknowledge your merits; as I have ever considered my own military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the army; as my heart has ever expanded with joy when I have heard its praises, and my indignation has arisen when the mouth of detraction has been opened against it; it can scarcely be supposed, at this last stage of the war, that I am indifferent to its interests. But how are they to be promoted? The way is plain, says the anonymous addresser. If war continues, remove into the unsettled country, there establish yourselves, and leave an ungrateful country to defend itself. But who are they to defend? Our wives, our children, our farms, and other property which we leave behind us? Or, in this state of hostile separation, are we to take the two first (the latter

cannot be removed) to perish in a wilderness with hunger, cold, and nakedness?

"'If peace takes place, never sheath your swords,' says he, 'until you have obtained full and ample justice.' This dreadful alternative of either deserting our country in the extremest hour of her distress, or turning our arms against it, which is the apparent object, unless Congress can be compelled into instant compliance, has something so shocking in it, that humanity revolts at the idea. My God! What can this writer have in view, by recommending such measures? Can he be a friend to the army? Can he be a friend to this country? Rather is he not an insidious foe, some emissary, perhaps, from New York, plotting the ruin of both, by sowing the seeds of discord and separation between the civil and military powers of the continent? And what a compliment does he pay to our understandings, when he recommends measures, in either alternative, impracticable in their nature? But here, Gentlemen, I will drop the curtain, because it would be as imprudent in me to assign my reasons for this opinion, as it would be insulting to your conception to suppose you stood in need of them. A moment's reflection will convince every dispassionate mind of the physical impossibility of carrying either proposal into execution. There might, Gentlemen, be an impropriety in my taking notice, in this address to you, of an anonymous production; but the manner in which that performance has been introduced to the army; the effect it was intended to have, together with some other circumstances, will amply justify my observations on the tendency of that writing.

"With respect to the advice given by the author, to suspect the man who shall recommend moderate measures and longer forbearance, I spurn it, as every man who regards that liberty and reveres that justice for which we contend, undoubtedly must; for if men are to be precluded from offering their sentiments on a matter which may involve the most serious and alarming consequences that can invite the consideration of mankind, reason is of no use to us. The freedom of speech may be taken away, and dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep, to the slaughter. I cannot, in justice to my own belief, and what I have great reason to conceive is the intention of Congress, conclude this address, without giving it as my decided opinion, that that honourable body entertain exalted sentiments of the services of the army, and from a full conviction of its merits and sufferings will do it complete justice. That their endeavours to discover and establish funds for this purpose have been unwearied, and will not cease until they have succeeded, I have not a doubt.

"But, like all other large bodies, where there is a variety of different interests to reconcile, their determinations are slow. Why then should we distrust them? and in consequence of that distrust adopt measures which may cast a shade over that glory which has been so justly acquired, and tarnish the reputation of an army which is celebrated through all Europe for its fortitude and patriotism? And for what is this done? To bring the object we seek nearer? No; most certainly, in my opinion, it will cast it at a greater distance. For myself, and I take no merit in giving the assurance, being induced to it from

principles of gratitude, veracity, and justice, and a grateful sense of the confidence you have ever placed in me, a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you, under every vicissitude of fortune, and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honour to command, will oblige me to declare, in this public and solemn manner, that in the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and in the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe my country, and those powers we are bound to respect, you may freely command my services to the utmost extent of my abilities.

"While I give you these assurances, and pledge myself in the most unequivocal manner to exert whatever abilities I am possessed of in your favour, let me entreat you, Gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity, and sully the glory, you have hitherto maintained. Let me request you to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress, that previous to your dissolution as an army they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in the resolutions which were published to you two days ago; and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honour, as you respect the rights of humanity, and as you regard the military and national character of America, to express your utmost horror and

detestation of the man who wishes, under any specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our country; and who wickedly attempts to open the floodgates of civil discord, and deluge our rising empire in blood.

"By thus determining, and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes; you will defeat the insidious designs of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice. You will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue, rising superior to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings; and you will, by the dignity of your conduct, afford occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind, 'had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.'"

In the judgment, honour, and friendship of their general, the officers placed unbounded confidence; and his recommendations carried irresistible weight. The most desperate had not the hardihood to oppose his advice. General Knox moved, and Brigadier-General Putnam seconded, a resolution, "assuring him that the officers reciprocated his affectionate expressions with the greatest sincerity of which the human heart is capable," which passed unanimously. On the motion of General Putnam, a committee was then chosen, consisting of General Knox, Colonel Brooks, and Captain Heywood, to prepare resolutions on the business before them. They reported the following resolutions, which, on mature deliberation, passed unanimously.

"Resolved unanimously, that at the commence-

ment of the present war, the officers of the American army engaged in the service of their country from the purest love and attachment to the rights and liberties of human nature, which motives still exist in the highest degree, and that no circumstances of distress or danger shall induce a conduct that may tend to sully the reputation and glory which they have acquired, at the price of their blood and eight years' faithful services.

"Resolved unanimously, that the army continue to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of Congress and their country, and are fully convinced that the representatives of America will not disband or disperse the army until their accounts are liquidated, the balances accurately ascertained, and adequate funds established for payment; and in this arrangement the officers expect that the half-pay, or a commutation for it, should be efficaciously comprehended.

"Resolved unanimously, that his Excellency the Commander-in-chief be requested to write to his Excellency the President of Congress, earnestly entreating the most speedy decision of that honourable body upon the subject of our late address, which was forwarded by a committee of the army, some of whom are waiting upon Congress for the result. In the alternative of peace or war, this event would be highly satisfactory, and would produce immediate tranquillity in the minds of the army, and prevent any further machinations of designing men, to sow discord between the civil and military powers of the United States.

"On motion, resolved unanimously, that the officers of the American army view with abhorrence and reject with disdain the infamous propo-

sitions contained in a late anonymous address to the officers of the army, and resent with indignation the secret attempts of some unknown persons to collect the officers together, in a manner totally subversive of all discipline and good order.

"Resolved unanimously, that the thanks of the officers of the army be given to the committee who presented to Congress the late address of the army, for the wisdom and prudence with which they have conducted that business; and that a copy of the proceedings of this day, be transmitted by the President to Major-General M'Dougal; and that he be requested to continue his solicitations at Congress until the objects of his mission are accomplished."

CHAPTER VIII.

Washington's Letter to Congress on behalf of his Army—Conclusion of Peace—General Orders announcing the Event—Washington's Circular Letter to the Governors of the several States.

THUS was the danger, which threatened the cause of American independence in the hour of its triumph, once more averted by the commanding influence and wisdom of General Washington. But, while he thus opposed the irregular means adopted by his officers for the attainment of their wishes, no one was more sensible than he of the justice of their cause. This he frequently evinced before, and he now with unusual earnestness advocated their claims in the following letter to the President of Congress:—

"SIR,

"The result of the proceedings of the grand convention of the officers, which I have the honour of inclosing to your Excellency for the inspection of Congress, will, I flatter myself, be considered as the last glorious proof of patriotism which could have been given by men who aspired to the distinction of a patriot army, and will not only confirm their claim to the justice, but will increase their title to the gratitude of their country.

"Having seen the proceedings on the part of the army terminate with perfect unanimity, and in

a manner entirely consonant to my wishes; being impressed with the liveliest sentiments of affection for those who have so long, so patiently, and so cheerfully suffered and fought under my immediate direction; having, from motives of justice, duty, and gratitude, spontaneously offered myself as an advocate for their rights; and having been requested to write to your Excellency, earnestly entreating the most speedy decision of Congress upon the subjects of the late address from the army to that honourable body; it now only remains for me to perform the task I have assumed, and to intercede in their behalf, as I now do, that the sovereign power will be pleased to verify the predictions I have pronounced of, and the confidence the army have reposed in, the justice of their country.

"And here I humbly conceive it is altogether unnecessary (while I am pleading the cause of an army which has done and suffered more than any other army ever did in the defence of the rights and liberties of human nature) to expatiate on their claims to the most ample compensation for their meritorious services; because they are perfectly known to the whole world, and because (although the topics are inexhaustible) enough has already been said on the subject. To prove these assertions, to evince that my sentiments have ever been uniform, and to show what my ideas of the rewards in question have always been, I appeal to the archives of Congress, and call on those sacred deposits to witness for me. And in order that my observations and arguments, in favour of a future adequate provision for the officers of the army, may be brought to remembrance again, and

considered in a single point of view, without giving Congress the trouble of having recourse to their files, I will beg leave to transmit herewith an extract from a representation made by me to a committee of Congress, so long ago as the 20th of January, 1778, and also the transcript of a letter to the President of Congress, dated near Passaic Falls, October 11, 1780.

"'That in the critical and perilous moment when the last mentioned communication was made, there was the utmost danger that a dissolution of the army would have taken place, unless measures, similar to those recommended, had been adopted, will not admit of a doubt. That the adoption of the resolution granting half-pay for life has been attended with all the happy consequences I had foretold, so far as respected the good of the service, let the astonishing contrast between the state of the army at this instant and at the former period determine: and that the establishment of funds, and security of the payment of all the just demands of the army, will be the most certain means of preserving the national faith and future tranquillity of this extensive continent, is my decided opinion.'

"By the preceding remarks it will be readily imagined, that, instead of retracting and reprehending (from farther experience and reflection) the mode of compensation so strenuously urged in the inclosures, I am more and more confirmed in the sentiment; and, if in the wrong, suffer me to please myself in the grateful delusion. For if, besides the simple payment of their wages, a further compensation is not due to the sufferings and sacrifices of the officers, then have I been mistaken indeed. If the whole army have not merited whatever a

grateful people can bestow, then have I been beguiled by prejudice, and built opinion on the basis of error. If this country should not in the event perform every thing which has been requested in the late memorial to Congress, then will my belief become vain, and the hope that has been excited void of foundation. And if (as has been suggested for the purpose of inflaming their passions) the officers of the army 'are to be the only sufferers by this revolution; if, retiring from the field, they are to grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt; if they are to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honour,' then shall I have learned what ingratitude is; then shall I have realised a tale which will embitter every moment of my future life.

"But I am under no such apprehensions: a country rescued by their arms from impending ruin will never leave unpaid the debt of gratitude.

"Should any intemperate and improper warmth have mingled itself among the foregoing observations, I must entreat your Excellency and Congress that it may be attributed to the effusions of an honest zeal in the best of causes, and that my peculiar situation may be my apology; and I hope I need not on this momentous occasion make any new protestations of disinterestedness, having ever renounced for myself the idea of pecuniary reward. The consciousness of having attempted faithfully to discharge my duty, and the approbation of my country, will be a sufficient recompense for my services.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) "GEORGE WASHINGTON."

At length, in the early part of April, the copy of a declaration published in Paris, and signed by the American commissioners, was received, which announced the mutual ratification of the articles of peace on the part of Great Britain and France; and on the 19th of that month, the cessation of hostilities was proclaimed. This great event was announced to the army by Washington in the following general orders:—

The COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF orders the cessation of hostilities between the United States of America and the King of Great Britain to be publicly proclaimed to-morrow at twelve o'clock at the New Building, and that the proclamation, which will be communicated herewith, be read to-morrow evening at the head of every regiment and corps of the army; after which the chaplains, with the several brigades, will render thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his over-ruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among the nations. Although the proclamation before alluded to extends only to the prohibition of hostilities, and not to the annunciation of a general peace, yet it must afford the most rational and sincere satisfaction to every benevolent mind, as it puts a period to a long and doubtful contest, stops the effusion of human blood, opens the prospect to a more splendid scene, and, like another morning star, promises the approach of a brighter day than hath hitherto illuminated the western hemisphere. On such a happy day, which is the harbinger of peace, a day which completes the eighth year of the war, it would be ingratitude not to rejoice, it

would be insensibility not to participate in the general felicity.

The commander-in-chief, far from endeavouring to stifle the feelings of joy in his own bosom, offers his most cordial congratulations on the occasion to all the officers of every denomination, to all the troops of the United States in general, and in particular to those gallant and persevering men who had resolved to defend the rights of their invaded country so long as the war should continue. For these are the men who ought to be considered as the pride and boast of the American army; and who, crowned with well-earned laurels, may soon withdraw from the field of glory to the more tranquil walks of civil life.

While the general recollects the almost infinite variety of scenes through which we have passed with a mixture of pleasure, astonishment, and gratitude; while he contemplates the prospect before us with rapture, he cannot help wishing that all the brave men (of whatever condition they may be), who have shared in the toils and dangers of effecting this glorious revolution, of rescuing millions from the hand of oppression, and of laying the foundation of a great empire, might be impressed with a proper idea of the dignified part they have been called to act (under the smiles of Providence) on the stage of human affairs; for happy, thrice happy shall they be pronounced hereafter, who have contributed any thing, who have performed the meanest office in erecting this stupendous fabric of freedom and empire on the broad basis of independency, who have assisted in protecting the rights of human nature, and establishing an asylum for the poor and oppressed of all nations

and religions. The glorious task for which we first flew to arms being thus accomplished, the liberties of our country being fully acknowledged, and firmly secured by the smiles of Heaven on the purity of our cause, and the honest exertions of a feeble people, determined to be free, against a powerful nation disposed to oppress them; and the character of those who have persevered through every extremity of hardship, suffering, and danger being immortalised by the illustrious appellation of the *patriot army;* nothing now remains but for the actors of this mighty scene to preserve a perfect unvarying consistency of character through the very last act, to close the drama with applause, and to retire from the military theatre with the same approbation of angels and men which has crowned all their former virtuous actions. For this purpose, no disorder or licentiousness must be tolerated; every considerate and well-disposed soldier must remember it will be absolutely necessary to wait with patience until peace shall be declared, or Congress shall be enabled to take proper measures for the security of the public stores, &c. As soon as these arrangements shall be made, the general is confident there will be no delay in discharging, with every mark of distinction and honour, all the men enlisted for the war, who will then have faithfully performed their engagements with the public. The general has already interested himself in their behalf, and he thinks he need not repeat the assurances of his disposition to be useful to them on the present and every other proper occasion. In the mean time, he is determined that no military neglects or excesses shall go unpunished while he retains the command of the army.

The sudden removal of all the principal causes of public apprehension left General Washington at liberty to devote some attention to the preparation of the public mind for the novel circumstances in which they would be placed by the peace just concluded. The Americans were now for the first time to act in the capacity of an independent nation, and their great patriot, now profoundly acquainted with the dispositions of his countrymen, was deeply concerned that they should avoid those mischievous errors, in entering on their new career, which had perpetually endangered their success in the late war. For this purpose he wrote a circular letter to the governors of the several states, pointing out the course which he now deemed it the duty and the interest of his country to adopt. This letter, whether we regard the sound and enlightened opinions which it developes, or the manly and beautiful style in which it is composed, is unquestionably one of the ablest productions of Washington's pen. On all these accounts a considerable portion of it should be presented to the reader. It began as follows:—

"SIR,

"The great object for which I had the honour to hold an appointment in the service of my country being accomplished, I am now preparing to resign it into the hands of Congress, and return to that domestic retirement which, it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance; a retirement for which I have never ceased to sigh through a long and painful absence, in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the world) I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed

repose; but, before I carry this resolution into effect, I think it a duty incumbent on me to make this my last official communication, to congratulate you on the glorious events which Heaven has been pleased to produce in our favour; to offer my sentiments respecting some important subjects which appear to me to be intimately connected with the tranquillity of the United States; to take my leave of your Excellency as a public character, and to give my final blessing to that country in whose service I have spent the prime of my life; for whose sake I have consumed so many anxious days and watchful nights; and whose happiness being extremely dear to me, will always constitute no inconsiderable part of my own.

"Impressed with the liveliest sensibility on this pleasing occasion, I will claim the indulgence of detailing the more copiously on the subject of our mutual felicitation. When we consider the magnitude of the prize we contended for, the doubtful nature of the contest, and the favourable manner in which it has terminated, we shall find the greatest possible reason for gratitude and rejoicing: this is a theme that will afford infinite delight to every benevolent and liberal mind, whether the event in contemplation be considered as a source of present enjoyment, or the parent of future happiness; and we shall have equal occasion to felicitate ourselves on the lot which Providence has assigned us, whether we view it in a natural, political, or a moral point of view.

"The citizens of America, placed in the most enviable condition, as the sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the world, and

abounding with all the necessaries and conveniences of life, are now, by the late satisfactory pacification, acknowledged to be possessed of absolute freedom and independency; they are from this period to be considered as the actors on a most conspicuous theatre, which seems to be peculiarly designed by Providence for the display of human greatness and felicity: here they are not only surrounded with everything that can contribute to the completion of private and domestic enjoyment, but Heaven has crowned all its other blessings, by giving a surer opportunity for political happiness than any other nation has ever been favoured with. Nothing can illustrate these observations more forcibly than the recollection of the happy conjuncture of times and circumstances, under which our republic assumed its rank among the nations.

"The foundation of our empire was not laid in a gloomy age of ignorance and superstition, but at an epocha when the rights of mankind were better understood and more clearly defined, than at any former period. Researches of the human mind after social happiness have been carried to a great extent. The treasures of knowledge acquired by the labours of philosophers, sages, and through a long succession of years, are laid open for use, and their collected wisdom may be happily applied in the establishment of our forms of government. The free cultivation of letters, the unbounded extension of commerce, the progressive refinement of manners, the growing liberality of sentiment, and, above all, the pure and benign light of revelation, have had a meliorating influence on mankind, and increased the blessings of society. At this auspicious period the United States came into

existence as a nation, and if their citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own.

"Such is our situation, and such are our prospects: but notwithstanding the cup of blessing is thus reached out to us, notwithstanding happiness is ours, if we have a disposition to seize the occasion, and make it our own; yet it appears to me, there is an option still left to the United States of America, whether they will be respectable and prosperous, or contemptible and miserable as a nation. This is the time of their political probation; this is the moment, when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them; this is the time to establish or ruin their national character for ever; this is the favourable moment to give such a tone to the federal government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution; or this may be the ill fated moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one state against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes. For, according to the system of policy the states shall adopt at this moment, they will stand or fall: and, by their confirmation or lapse, it is yet to be decided, whether the revolution must ultimately be considered as a blessing or a curse; a blessing or a curse, not to the present age alone, for with our fate will the destiny of unborn millions be involved.

"With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak to your Excellency the lan-

guage of freedom and sincerity, without disguise. I am aware, however, those who differ from me in political sentiments, may perhaps remark, I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty; and they may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is alone the result of the purest intention; but the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives, the part I have hitherto acted in life, the determination I have formed of not taking any share in public business hereafter, the ardent desire I feel and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government, will, I flatter myself, sooner or later, convince my countrymen, that I could have no sinister views in delivering, with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this address.

"There are four things, which I humbly conceive are essential to the well being, I may even venture to say, to the existence of the United States, as an independent power.

"1st. An indissoluble union of the states under one federal head.

"2ndly. A sacred regard to public justice.

"3rdly. The adoption of a proper peace establishment. And,

"4thly. The prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies, to make those mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity, and, in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community.

"These are the pillars on which the glorious

fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. Liberty is the basis, and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country."

On the first head the general closes his remarks in the following manner :—" It is only in our united character that we are known as an empire ; that our independence is acknowledged ; that our power can be regarded or our credit supported among foreign nations. The treaties of the European powers with the United States of America, will have no validity on a dissolution of the union. We shall be left nearly in a state of nature, or we may find by our own unhappy experience, that there is a natural and necessary progression from the extreme of anarchy to the extreme of tyranny ; and that arbitrary power is most easily established on the ruins of liberty abused to licentiousness."

On the second topic he has the following observations :—" In this state of absolute freedom and perfect security, who will grudge to yield a very little of his property to support the common interest of society, and insure the protection of government ? Who does not remember the frequent declarations at the commencement of the war, that we should be completely satisfied, if at the expense of one-half we could defend the remainder of our possessions ? Where is the man to be found who wishes to remain indebted for the defence of his own person and property, to the exertions, the bravery, and the blood of others, without making one generous effort to repay the debt of honour

and of gratitude? In what part of the continent shall we find any man or body of men who would not blush to stand up and propose measures purposely calculated to rob the soldier of his stipend, and the public creditor of his due? And were it possible that such a flagrant instance of injustice could ever happen, would it not excite the general indignation, and tend to bring down upon the authors of such measures the aggravated vengeance of Heaven? If, after all, a spirit of disunion or a temper of obstinacy and perverseness should manifest itself in any of the states, if such an ungenerous disposition should attempt to frustrate all the happy effects that might be expected to flow from the union, if there should be a refusal to comply with the requisitions for funds to discharge the annual interest of the public debts, and if that refusal should revive again all those jealousies and produce all those evils which are now happily removed, Congress, who have in all their transactions shown a great degree of magnanimity and justice, will stand justified in the sight of God and man, and the state alone which puts itself in opposition to the aggregate wisdom of the continent, and follows such mistaken and pernicious counsels, will be responsible for all the consequences.

"For my part, conscious of having acted while a servant of the public in the manner I conceived best suited to promote the real interests of my country, having in consequence of my fixed belief in some measure pledged myself to the army, that their country would finally do them complete and ample justice, and not wishing to conceal any instance of my official conduct from the eyes of the world, I have thought proper to transmit to

your Excellency the enclosed collection of papers relative to the half-pay and commutation granted by Congress to the officers of the army. From these communications my decided sentiments will be clearly comprehended, together with the conclusive reasons which induced me at an early period to recommend the adoption of the measure in the most earnest and serious manner. As the proceedings of Congress, the army, and myself, are open to all, and contain in my opinion sufficient information to remove the prejudices and errors which may have been entertained by any, I think it unnecessary to say any thing more than just to observe, that the resolutions of Congress, now alluded to, are undoubtedly as absolutely binding upon the United States as the most solemn acts of confederation or legislation. As to the idea which, I am informed, has in some instances prevailed that the half-pay and commutation are to be regarded merely in the odious light of a pension, it ought to be exploded for ever. That provision should be viewed as it really was, a reasonable compensation offered by Congress, at a time when they had nothing else to give to the officers of the army, for services then to be performed. It was the only means to prevent a total dereliction of the service. It was a part of their hire, I may be allowed to say; it was the price of their blood and of your independence. It is, therefore, more than a common debt—it is a debt of honour: it can never be considered as a pension or gratuity, nor be cancelled until it is fairly discharged."

Having dilated on these subjects, the letter was thus concluded:—

"If in treating of political points a greater latitude

than usual has been taken in the course of this address, the importance of the crisis and the magnitude of the objects in discussion must be my apology. It is, however, neither my wish or expectation that the preceding observations should claim any regard, except so far as they shall appear to be dictated by a good intention consonant to the immediate rules of justice, calculated to produce a liberal system of policy, and founded on whatever experience may have been acquired by a long and close attention to public business. Here I might speak with the more confidence from my actual observations, and if it would not swell this letter (already too prolix) beyond the bounds I had prescribed myself, I could demonstrate to every mind open to conviction that in less time, and with much less expense than has been incurred, the war might have been brought to the same happy conclusion if the resources of the continent could have been properly drawn forth; that the distresses and disappointments which have very often occurred have, in too many instances, resulted more from a want of energy in the continental government than a deficiency of means in the particular states; that the inefficacy of measures arising from the want of an adequate authority in the supreme power, from a partial compliance with the requisitions of Congress in some of the states, and from a failure of punctuality in others, while it tended to damp the zeal of those who were more willing to exert themselves, served also to accumulate the expenses of the war and to frustrate the best concerted plans; and that the discouragement occasioned by the complicated difficulties and embarrassments in which our affairs were by this

means involved, would have long ago produced the dissolution of any army less patient, less virtuous, and less persevering than that which I have had the honour to command. But while I mention these things, which are notorious facts, as the defects of our federal constitution, particularly in the prosecution of a war, I beg it may be understood that, as I have ever taken a pleasure in gratefully acknowledging the assistance and support I have derived from every class of citizens, so shall I always be happy to do justice to the unparalleled exertions of the individual states on many occasions.

"I have thus freely disclosed what I wished to make known before I surrendered up my public trust to those who committed it to me: the task is now accomplished. I now bid adieu to your Excellency, as the chief magistrate of your state; at the same time I bid a last farewell to the cares of office, and all the employments of public life.

"It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your legislature, at their next meeting; and that they may be considered as the legacy of one who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who, even in the shade of retirement, will not fail to implore the divine benediction upon it.

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the state over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow-citizens of the United

States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion; without an humble imitation of whose example, in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation.

"I have the honour to be,

"&c. &c.

(Signed) "GEORGE WASHINGTON."

That reader must have small pretensions to sensibility who can peruse this extraordinary letter without admiration. Every one who has lived to see the present political position of the United States must be struck with the almost prophetic discernment displayed in its contents. Indeed it is difficult to say which of the attributes of Washington's character it most impressively developes; whether the penetration of his intellect, the ardour of his patriotism, or the depth of his piety.

CHAPTER IX.

Continued Dissatisfaction of the Army—Temporising Policy of Congress—Successful Interference of Washington—Evacuation of New York—Resignation of the Commander-in-Chief—He takes Leave of his Officers and of the Army, and resigns his Commission to the Congress—Review of the American War—Causes of its final Success—Results of this Success to America, France, England, and the World.

THE most important subject which now presented itself to the legislature was the means of satisfying the claims of the army, and thus removing the danger to be apprehended from that quarter; and here again the radical defects both in the structure of the political system and in the character of the people, were most conspicuously displayed. On the one hand the Congress had no authoritative hold upon the governments of the several states, and was reduced to the singular necessity of entreating of those bodies so far to comply with their requisitions as to enable them to advance a part of the arrears due to the soldiers. While, on the other hand, the different states freed from the immediate sufferings and dangers of invasion, viewed with the most disgraceful indifference the just claims of their protectors, and paid no regard to the application of Congress, and the painful position in which their neglect was placing them. The minister of finance was, therefore, compelled again

to overdraw the revenue; and, on the 30th of June 1783, was found to have expended upwards of a million of dollars beyond his receipts.

Apprehensive of the danger of disbanding an unpaid and dissatisfied army, Congress instructed the commander-in-chief to grant furloughs to non-commissioned officers and soldiers engaged for the war, who were not required to rejoin their regiments. These orders produced universal dissatisfaction. A number of officers presented an address to the commander-in-chief, expressive of the highest respect and attachment to his person, but strongly deprecating their dispersion before the satisfaction of their claims. Washington, fully sympathising with them in their feelings, and appreciating their merits, merely answered that furloughs were a matter of indulgence, and not of compulsion, and that, therefore, he should take no active measures in opposition to their wishes.

By this assurance satisfaction was restored to the army. While, however, the troops who served immediately under the commander-in-chief conducted themselves with such exemplary patience and propriety, a mutiny broke out among the new levies of the State of Pennsylvania, by which the government itself was exposed to outrage and insult. Defying the authority of their officers, they marched from Lancaster to Philadelphia, where they were joined by some other disaffected troops, and proceeded to the State House, where Congress was sitting, which they surrounded, and sent in a threatening message to the President, declaring their intention to attack them if certain demands were not complied with in twenty minutes. No injury was, however, sustained by any member

of the legislature, and the mutiny was quieted without bloodshed.

Nothing could exceed the chagrin of General Washington on hearing that any soldiers in the American service had been guilty of such an audacious insult to the government. In his letter on the subject to Congress, he says—

"While I suffer the most poignant distress in observing that a handful of men, contemptible in numbers, and equally so in point of service, if the veteran troops from the southward have not been seduced by their example, and who are not worthy to be called soldiers, should disgrace themselves and their country as the Pennsylvania mutineers have done, by insulting the sovereign authority of the United States, and that of their own; I feel an inexpressible satisfaction, that even this behaviour cannot stain the fame of the American soldiery. It cannot be imputable to, or reflect dishonour on, the army at large; but, on the contrary, it will, by the striking contrast it exhibits, hold up to public view the troops in the most advantageous point of light. Upon taking all the circumstances into consideration, I cannot sufficiently express my surprise and indignation at the arrogance, the folly, and the wickedness, of the mutineers; nor can I sufficiently admire the fidelity, the bravery, and patriotism, which must for ever signalise the unsullied character of the other corps of our army. For when we consider that these Pennsylvania levies, who have now mutinied, are recruits, and soldiers of a day, who have not borne the heat and burden of the war, and who can have in reality very few hardships to complain of; and when we, at the same time, recollect that those soldiers, who

have lately been furloughed from this army, are the veterans who have patiently endured hunger, nakedness, and cold, who have suffered and bled without a murmur, and who, with perfect good order, have retired to their homes, without a settlement of their accounts, or a farthing of money in their pockets; we shall be as much astonished at the virtues of the latter as we are struck with horror and detestation at the proceedings of the former: and every candid mind, without indulging ill-grounded prejudices, will undoubtedly make the proper discrimination."

On the 25th of November 1783, the British troops evacuated New York, and a detachment of the American army took possession of the town. On this occasion General Washington, accompanied by a number of military officers, together with the governor and a large cavalcade of civil officers and citizens, made his triumphal entry into the city. He was received with all the marks of deep respect and enthusiastic admiration which the occasion seemed to call for. At this place he determined, on divesting himself of the supreme command, to take a farewell of his companions in arms, and the 4th of December was fixed on for this affecting interview.

At noon, says Judge Marshall, "the principal officers of the army assembled at Frances' tavern; soon after which their beloved commander entered the room. His emotions were too strong to be concealed. Filling a glass, he turned to them, and said, 'With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you: I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy, as your former ones have been glorious and

honourable.' Having drunk, he added: 'I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged to you, if each of you will come and take me by the hand.' General Knox, being nearest, turned to him. Incapable of utterance, Washington grasped his hand, and embraced him. In the same affectionate manner he took leave of each succeeding officer. In every eye was the tear of dignified sensibility, and not a word was articulated to interrupt the majestic silence, and the tenderness of the scene. Leaving the room, he passed through the corps of light infantry, and walked to Whitehall, where a barge waited to convey him to Powles-hook. The whole company followed in procession. On arriving there, he entered the barge, and as it moved from the shore, he waved his hat and bowed to the multitude in silence; while they stood uncovered and returned his dignified salutation with every mark of affectionate respect. On arriving at Philadelphia, he delivered in his accounts for the whole war to the controller. The entire amount of expenditure with which he charged the government was £14,479 18*s.* 9¾*d.*; but in his journal we find the following note:—

"I find upon the final adjustment of these accounts, that I am a considerable loser, my disbursements falling a good deal short of my receipts, and the money I had upon hand of my own: for besides the sums I carried with me to Cambridge in 1775, I received moneys afterwards on private account in 1777 and since, which, except small sums that I had occasion now and then to apply to private uses, were all expended in the public service. Through hurry, I suppose, and the

perplexity of business (for I know not how else to account for the deficiency) I have omitted to charge the same, whilst every debt against me is here credited.

July 1st, 1783."

On arriving at Annapolis in Maryland, where the Congress was sitting, he communicated to that body on the 20th of December his wish to resign to them the commission he had the honour of holding in their service, and requested to know whether it was their pleasure that he should offer his resignation in writing or at an audience. With a view of giving a more memorable character to this great occasion, they resolved that the resignation of their commander-in-chief should be offered in public, and fixed for this purpose the 23rd of December. On this day the House of Congress was thronged with members, foreign officers of state, and crowds of anxious spectators. At noon on that day General Washington entered the assembly, and was conducted by a secretary to a chair. After an interval of breathless silence, the President rose, and informed him that "the United States in Congress assembled were prepared to receive his communications." Upon this the general rose with that dignity which never forsook him, and which the greatness of the occasion elevated into majesty, and addressed the President as follows:—

"MR. PRESIDENT,

"The great events on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I have now the honour of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself to them, to surrender into their hands the trust

committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country.

"Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States, of becoming a respectable nation, I resign with satisfaction the appointment I accepted with diffidence; a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme power of the union, and the patronage of Heaven. The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, increases with every review of the momentous contest.

"While I repeat my obligations to the army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings not to acknowledge in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the gentlemen who have been attached to my person during the war. It was impossible that the choice of confidential officers to compose my family should have been more fortunate. Permit me, Sir, to recommend in particular, those who have continued in the service to the present moment, as worthy of the favourable notice and patronage of Congress.

"I consider it as an indispensable duty, to close this last act of my official life by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under

whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."

After advancing to the chair, and delivering his commission to the president, he returned to his place, and received, standing, the following answer of Congress, which was delivered by the President:—

"SIR,

"The United States in Congress assembled, receive with emotions too affecting for utterance, the solemn resignation of the authorities under which you have led their troops with success through a perilous and a doubtful war. Called upon by your country to defend its invaded rights, you accepted the sacred charge, before it had formed alliances, and whilst it was without funds or a government to support you. You have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power through all disasters and changes. You have, by the love and confidence of your fellow citizens, enabled them to display their martial genius, and transmit their fame to posterity. You have persevered, till these United States, aided by a magnanimous king and nation, have been enabled, under a just Providence, to close the war in freedom, safety, and independence; on which happy event, we sincerely join you in congratulations.

"Having defended the standard of liberty in this new world; having taught a lesson useful to those who inflict, and those who feel oppression,

you retire from the great theatre of action with the blessings of your fellow citizens: but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command; it will continue to animate remotest ages.

"We feel with you our obligations to the army in general, and will particularly charge ourselves with the interests of those confidential officers, who have attended your person to this affecting moment.

"We join you in commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, beseeching him to dispose the hearts and minds of its citizens, to improve the opportunity afforded them of becoming a happy and respectable nation. And, for you, we address to him our earnest prayers, that a life so beloved may be fostered with all his care; that your days may be happy as they have been illustrious; and that He will finally give you that reward which this world cannot give."

After receiving this reply the hero withdrew from the Hall of Congress, leaving the spectators in silent admiration, and oppressed with emotions which the President justly described as "too affecting for utterance."

It now remained for the general to take leave of the army at large, and the second of November had been fixed for discharging that part of the army which was engaged to serve during the war. On that day, General Washington issued his farewell orders to the armies of the United States, in the following words:—

"Rocky-Hill, near Princeton,
Nov. 2nd, 1783.

"The United States in Congress assembled, after giving the most honourable testimony to the merits of the federal armies, and presenting them with the thanks of their country, for their long, eminent, and faithful service, having thought proper, by their proclamation bearing date the 18th of October last, to discharge such part of the troops as were engaged for the war, and to permit the officers on furlough to retire from service on and after to-morrow; which proclamation, having been communicated in the public papers, for the information and government of all concerned, it only remains for the commander-in-chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the armies of the United States, however widely dispersed the individuals who compose them may be, and to bid them an affectionate, a long farewell!

"But before the commander-in-chief takes his final leave of those he holds most dear, he wishes to indulge himself a few moments in calling to mind a slight view of the past. He will, then, take the liberty of exploring, with his military friends, their future prospects; of advising the general line of conduct, which in his opinion, ought to be pursued; and he will conclude the address, by acknowledging the obligations he feels himself under, for the spirited and able assistance he has experienced from them in the performance of an ardous office.

"A contemplation of the complete attainment, at a period earlier than could have been expected, of the object for which we contended against so formidable a power, cannot but inspire us with

astonishment and gratitude. The disadvantageous circumstances, on our part, under which the war was undertaken, can never be forgotten. The signal interpositions of Providence in our feeble condition, were such as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving; while the unparalleled perseverance of the armies of the United States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement, for the space of eight long years, was little short of a standing miracle.

"It is not the meaning, nor within the compass of this address, to detail the hardships peculiarly incident to our service, or to describe the distresses which, in several instances, have resulted from the extremes of hunger and nakedness, combined with the rigours of an inclement season; nor is it necessary to dwell on the dark side of our past affairs.

"Every American officer and soldier must now console himself, for any unpleasant circumstance which may have occurred, by a recollection of the uncommon scenes in which he has been called to act no inglorious part, and the astonishing events of which he has been a witness; events, which have seldom, if ever before, taken place on the stage of human action; nor can they probably ever happen again. For who has before seen a disciplined army formed at once from such raw materials? Who, that was not a witness, could imagine, that the most violent local prejudices would cease so soon, and that men, who came from the different parts of the continent, strongly disposed by the habits of education to despise and quarrel with each other, would instantly become but one patriotic band of brothers? Or who, that was not on the spot, can trace the steps by which such a wonderful revolu-

tion has been effected, and such a glorious period put to all our warlike toils?

"It is universally acknowledged, that the enlarged prospects of happiness opened by the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, almost exceed the power of description; and shall not the brave men who have contributed so essentially to these inestimable acquisitions, retiring victorious from the field of war to the field of agriculture, participate in all the blessings which have been obtained? In such a republic, who will exclude them from the rights of citizens, and the fruits of their labours? In such a country, so happily circumstanced, the pursuits of commerce and the cultivation of the soil will unfold to industry the certain road to competence. To those hardy soldiers who are actuated by the spirit of adventure, the fisheries will afford ample and profitable employment; and the extensive and fertile regions of the west will yield a most happy asylum to those who, fond of domestic enjoyment, are seeking personal independence. Nor is it possible to conceive, that any one of the United States will prefer a national bankruptcy, and the dissolution of the union, to a compliance with the requisitions of Congress, and the payment of its just debts: so that the officers and soldiers may expect considerable assistance, in recommencing their civil occupations, from the sums due to them from the public, which must and will most inevitably be paid.

"In order to effect this desirable purpose, and remove the prejudices which may have taken possession of the minds of any of the good people of the states, it is earnestly recommended to all the troops, that, with strong attachment to the union,

they should carry with them into civil society the most conciliating dispositions; and that they should prove themselves not less virtuous and useful as citizens, than they have been victorious as soldiers. What though there should be some envious individuals, who are unwilling to pay the debt the public has contracted, or to yield the tribute due to merit? Yet let such unworthy treatment produce no invective, or any instance of intemperate conduct. Let it be remembered, that the unbiassed voice of the free citizens of the United States has promised the just reward, and given the merited applause. Let it be known and remembered, that the reputation of the federal armies is established beyond the reach of malevolence; and let a consciousness of their achievements and fame still excite the men who composed them to honourable actions, under the persuasion, that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry will not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valour, perseverance, and enterprise were in the field. Every one may rest assured, that much, very much of the future happiness of the officers and men, will depend upon the wise and manly conduct which shall be adopted by them when they are mingled with the great body of the community. And although the general has so frequently given it as his opinion, in the most public and explicit manner, that unless the principles of the federal government were properly supported, and the powers of the union increased, the honour, dignity, and justice of the nation would be lost for ever; yet he cannot help repeating on this occasion so interesting a sentiment, and leaving it as his last injunction, to every officer and every

soldier who may view the subject in the same serious point of light, to add his best endeavours to those of his worthy fellow-citizens, towards effecting these great and valuable purposes, on which our very existence as a nation so materially depends.

" The commander-in-chief conceives little is now wanting, to enable the soldier to change the military character into that of the citizen, but that steady decent tenor of behaviour which has generally distinguished, not only the army under his immediate command, but the different detachments and armies, through the course of the war. From their good sense and prudence he anticipates the happiest consequences; and while he congratulates them on the glorious occasion which renders their services in the field no longer necessary, he wishes to express the strong obligations he feels himself under for the assistance he has received from every class, and in every instance. He presents his thanks in the most serious and affectionate manner to the general officers as well for their counsel on many interesting occasions, as for their ardour in promoting the success of the plans he had adopted; to the commandants of regiments and corps, and to the other officers, for their zeal and attention in carrying his orders promptly into execution; to the staff, for their alacrity and exactness in performing the duties of their several departments; and to the non-commissioned officers and private soldiers, for their extraordinary patience and suffering, as well as their invincible fortitude in action; to the various branches of the army, the general takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his inviolable attachment and friendship.

He wishes more than bare professions were in his power, that he was really able to be useful to them all in future life; he flatters himself, however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him, has been done.

"And, being now about to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave in a short time of the military character, and to bid a final adieu to the armies he has so long had the honour to command, he can only again offer in their behalf his recommedations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies.

"May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favours, both here and hereafter, attend those who under the divine auspices have secured innumerable blessings for others. With these wishes, and this benediction, the commander-in-chief is about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed for ever."

Washington immediately "hastened," to use his own words, "with ineffable delight to his seat at Mount Vernon, on the banks of the Potowmac," where he gave up a fatigued and injured frame to the healing care of conjugal affection, and a lofty, pure, unimpaired, and self-approving mind, to the easy burdens and heartfelt pleasures of domestic life.

An attentive review of the great and eventful contest which has been thus narrated is calculated to teach some lessons of the highest importance; and nothing but an enlightened and candid atten-

tion is necessary to the acquisition of those invaluable principles which are established by this interesting portion of history.

In the recapitulation, the first point which demands attention is the principle upon which the war was conducted on the part of the American colonies. The opinion has now been sufficiently established that the *primum mobile* of political government resides in the people — the party governed, — whatever complication of machinery may intervene between that original power and the results which it produces. Upon this fundamental principle the Americans based their claims. In the strength of it they were "thrice armed." Planting upon this immoveable ground all their resources of resistance, and organising them under the direction of one commanding mind, they gained what in mechanics is called a *purchase*, which enabled them to repel the mighty attacks which were made upon their rights. The claim to govern a distant people who were to have no voice in the legislature which was to dispose of their property, was a claim obviously urged for the benefit of the few, while the injury was to fall upon the many, — a large and ever increasing nation, — born amidst all the circumstances which infix the instinct of liberty, and nurtured amidst all the hardships which mature the power of asserting it. It should, moreover, be recollected that those who endeavoured by their arms to enforce the claims of Great Britain had no personal interest whatever in the point at issue, and only fought under the impulses of that hereditary valour which necessarily belongs to the British soldier; while the

American troops contended for all that was dear in life,—for their altars and their hearths.

Another striking feature in the American war was the inexperience of the people in military affairs. Even their great commander cannot be said to have been bred a soldier; while the majority of those whom he governed had had no experience in warfare, except in the barbarous conflicts with the Indians, in which brute force, rather than skill and conduct, determined the result of the contest. This inexperience, however, showed itself in a more serious manner in the measures of government. Frequent reference has been made to the temporary enlistments of the American soldiery; and it is not too much to say, that the protraction of the war, and the necessity for foreign interference, was mainly dependent upon this circumstance. To this may be added the independent authority of the separate states. While these gave their support to the war in proportion as they were severally endangered by invasion, and while the Congress acted under the influence of a mistaken fear of a permanent army, all the efforts of the commander-in-chief were paralysed, and in a number of instances which have been narrated the interests of the American cause were placed upon the verge of ruin. The army was perpetually composed of raw recruits and of an undisciplined and independent militia, and all the influence of General Washington was frequently exerted in vain to induce the Congress to the adoption of the only measures by which the war could be successfully prosecuted. In short, the whole history of the war demonstrates that its success was owing to the talents and character of one man. That man

was GEORGE WASHINGTON. Amidst the contending opinions of thirteen independent states, amidst the turbulence of faction, and the storm of conflicting interests, he rose from time to time, like the morning star upon the troubled ocean, and immediately the turbid passions of a nation subsided into peace.

——— Simul alba nautis
Stella refulsit,
Defluit saxis agitatus humor :
Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes.

There can be no doubt that the ultimate success of the cause of American independence was owing to the alliance of America with France. This brought into the field a large and disciplined force which America could not possibly have supplied ; and at the crisis at which this assistance was obtained, the American force, if left to itself, could have expected nothing but total defeat. At the same time it must not be imagined that this accession of strength was owing to any sympathy in the French with the sentiments which actuated their allies. Every principle of the French policy was hostile to the cause of liberty ; and the character of the British government, even with relation to America, was mild and equitable compared with that under which the French nation had the misfortune to be placed. This anomalous alliance was chiefly owing to the hostility which subsisted between France and England, and partly owing to the zeal and influence of La Fayette. The entire conduct of this illustrious nobleman appears to have been dictated by the love of liberty — a feeling which, in his mind, rose superior even to the love of his country ; but which, when the first

object of his wishes was attained, manifested itself in a course of the most disinterested patriotism.

Another cause which contributed to the defeat of the British armies was that the scene of the conflict was a foreign land, of whose local resources they were comparatively ignorant, and where they were under the direction of a distant legislature, and dependent upon contingent supplies. On the other hand, nothing was more conspicuous in the military conduct of General Washington than the skill with which he availed himself of those advantages which his knowledge of the country afforded, and the prudence with which he selected and strengthened his positions; so that it may be said of him as of Fabius, that he was the shield of his country, and conquered by vigilant and cautious delay.

To these principal circumstances the success of the cause of American independence is traceable. The records of this triumph form one of the most remarkable passages in the history of mankind. There have been other instances in which a small and subordinate people, feeble in numbers and in wealth, and only strong in the justice of their claims, have obtained their freedom by perseverance and valour; but there is a combination of features in the present case which belong to few or none beside. In this instance the country which has been raised to independence by its arms has not been left a prey to faction or the victim of military despotism; but subsiding into the cultivation of the arts of peace, has advanced to commercial greatness and opulence, a free and independent republic. Instead of suffering a mere change of masters, it lost together the name and

the essence of servitude; instead of groaning under a weight of debt which paralysed the energies of national industry, it remained under only those liabilities which stimulated industry in the people, and compelled to economy in the government; instead of lying as a conquered country under the feet of her own defender, the American nation had the unexampled pride of seeing its founder divested of the powers it had conceded to him, mingling in the ranks of private society, and retaining none of the spoils of victory but its imperishable renown. By a happy transition from the pursuits of war to the study of legislation, and the culture of manufactures and arts, it advanced under benign and wholesome laws to the highest rank among nations, and stands "great, glorious, and free;" a monument which commemorates the triumph of the eternal principles of justice and liberty.

But these are not the greatest results which have flowed from this mighty revolution: it communicated an impulse to the universal human mind, the effects of which, even at the present time, have been but partially developed. Combining with other causes, it gave rise to one of the most extraordinary changes which ever passed upon civilised society. Its first effects were determined, for obvious reasons, to France; a country singularly calculated, both from its geographical position, its national character, and its political relations to circulate any principles which had taken an extensive hold upon the minds of its people. In the words of an eminent historian, "The American revolution tended to embody that spirit of reform which had been for some time floating on the political surface of France." The middle class more especially,

enlightened by the writings of contemporary and distinguished authors, and possessing an influence which was aggrandised by the profligacy of the higher orders and the ignorance of the lower, were the most strongly impressed by that event. On the other hand, the soldiers who had fought the battles of the Americans, naturally imbibed the principles for which they were contending. They returned to their homes, and doubtless spread the contagious spirit of liberty through a populace well prepared to receive it by the sufferings which they daily experienced from a corrupt and absolute government. They would necessarily feel the inconsistent folly of fighting for the liberties of others while they themselves were in bondage. They would learn from the grand experiment they had witnessed that when the spirit of freedom was once roused there was no earthly power that could resist it. These sentiments were circulated among a volatile and irritable people, and the result was what might well have been expected.

But whatever points of similarity there may be between the French and the American revolutions, there are some essential differences. Both were undertaken ostensibly for the redress of political wrongs: but they were conducted under a very different spirit. In America, the entire contest was a contest of principle—the point in dispute might be stated in a sentence, and was familiar to all; and the whole nation were more or less interested in the immediate question at issue; whereas in France the large majority, indifferent to the principles involved, were only anxious to plunder in the national wreck.

The causes of this difference are probably to be

found not so much in the political condition as in the character of the two nations. In America that measure of truth prevailed upon religious and moral questions which invariably flows from free inquiry; whereas in France an antiquated and fatal superstition, exploded by a few daring minds, had given place to avowed infidelity and the most unblushing licentiousness. To perceive this difference we need go no farther than the public acts of government. EXPEDIENCY was the only divinity which atheism had left to France; nor do we find in the most momentous acts of their legislature any reference to a higher principle, whether in morals or religion. Nor is there much more of reverence for the greatest of subjects in the pompous edicts and ceremonies of other Catholic states, where the solemn nomenclature of the Christian religion is adopted in public documents with a patronising air, as if recognising it as under the protection of the State. Even in England the case is not widely different. Here the sacred sanctions of Christianity are introduced upon the most trivial occasions. They are carried alike into the most ordinary transactions of business, politics, and the administration of justice; so that men have even been consecrated to the office of constables and excisemen by the most sublime and awful sacrament which the founder of Christianity has left in His church. From all this there has followed a cold and habitual formality in the recognition of religion, which shows that the result of its strange alliance with the common transactions of society has been rather to degrade and secularise the one, than to elevate and sanctify the other.

It is impossible for any student of the portion

of history which we are now reviewing to be insensible to the contrast afforded in this respect by the United States to the whole Christian world beside. The depth and genuineness of religious feeling evinced in some of their public documents which have been presented to the reader in these pages, give to them a character of moral sublimity to which the records of civil government afford nothing parallel.

This radical difference between the principles of the French and American people is sufficient to account for the difference in the two revolutions. In the great principles which have been referred to, the foundations of the one empire were immoveably laid, and in accordance with them the great struggle was carried on; so that while those sufferings were experienced which are inseparable from a state of warfare, the character of Washington was unsullied by any of those acts of cruelty and excess which have tarnished the reputation of almost every conqueror beside. On the contrary, the revolution to which it contributed on the opposite side of the Atlantic followed out to a fearful extent the opposite sentiments. It was conducted throughout on the principle of destruction without substitution, of individual aggrandisement irrespectively of national interests; while the diminished estimate of the value of life which the atheistical system involves, and the consequent contempt of all subordinate obligations, occasioned an unexampled series of barbarities, the evils of which were immediate and insupportable, while any good effects which might result were of necessity contingent and remote.

But if the American revolution produced such

effects upon a people who, so far as respects the principles at issue, were but unconcerned spectators, it may well be imagined that it would operate far more powerfully on a nation in whose midst the very principles on which it proceeded had been advocated for years with unexampled ability and energy. From it may be dated the general reception of those enlarged views under the operation of which the whole character and constitution of the British empire has been changed within the last half century. It directed the minds of many to the rights of men and the fundamental principles of civil government. From its results they learned that religion, morals and commerce would flourish best in the beams of political freedom, and were stunted by monopoly and compulsion; that formularies and civil disabilities were incompetent to produce either unanimity or truth in religious opinion, and that property might be secured to its rightful possessors without parliamentary influence, hereditary rank, or a sanguinary code of laws. To these views we must attribute the great advances which have been made in political liberty in Great Britain;—the repeal of the laws imposing penal restraints upon dissenters and catholics; the abolition of slavery, and the achievement of parliamentary reform; events which together constitute a grand revolution, the occurrence of which without civil commotion and bloodshed is an unprecedented event, and appears to establish some of the great principles which were opposed by Great Britain in every stage of the American war.

Nor have the results of the American revolution been even yet fully developed. It unveils a bright prospect in futurity, to which the eyes of all

thinking men are directed with intense anxiety and hope. It has opened up amongst the nations of the earth a central source of liberty which promises to visit all lands with its benignant influence. It has let loose, as it were, a mighty people upon the career of intellectual, moral, and commercial advancement;—speaking and spreading the language of the parent state, improving upon its constitutional model, and opening their markets to its literature and manufactures.

"Greece and Rome," says an eloquent contemporary writer, "boasted of their colonies—their emigrant settlements in Asia or in Gaul. What would they have thought of ours! How would they have exulted in the parentage of a stock which, in the brief period of one hundred and fifty years, had swelled from a knot of pilgrims into an independent nation; and which in the first fifty years of its independence as a nation had drawn together, by a centripetal force like that of nature, the discordant materials of half a globe, and magnetised the mass with the electric spark of civil and religious freedom!"

CHAPTER X.

General Washington in Private Life—His joy on returning to it—Addresses of Congratulation and Thanks and Statues voted to him—Pursues Agriculture—Correspondence on this Subject—Exertions and Correspondence respecting Improvements in the Inland Navigation of America—Apprehensions excited by the Society of the Cincinnati—Washington's Conduct respecting it—Mischievous working of the Form of Government in the United States—Vain Attempts of Congress to secure the Liquidation of the National Debt—Views of Washington evinced by his Correspondence.

We have seen General Washington amidst the vicissitudes of the American war, and invested with the glory of having terminated it with success. We have now to contemplate him in retirement. In this portion of his history, the reader must expect but few striking incidents. His time was chiefly employed between the pursuits of agriculture, into which he entered with remarkable activity and interest, and the maintenance of an unusually extensive correspondence. The biography of Washington must, of necessity, be chiefly confined, during this interval of privacy, to the exposition of his opinions upon events as they arose; and these, so far as they are contained in his correspondence, will be presented to the reader in his own words.

His predominant sentiments on his retirement from public life were those of irrepressible joy.

One or two instances in which this feeling was expressed, will be read with interest. A letter, written to Governor Clinton, a few days after his arrival at Mount Vernon, contains the following passage :—

" The scene is at length closed. I feel myself eased of a load of public care, and hope to spend the rest of my days in cultivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestic virtues."

" At length, my dear Marquis," said he to his noble friend, La Fayette, " I have become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac, and under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, free from the bustle of a camp and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments of which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own—perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all—and the courtier who is always watching the countenance of his prince in the hope of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk and tread the paths of private life with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life until I sleep with my fathers."

And again, shortly after, in a letter to General Knox, he says—

"I am just beginning to experience the ease and freedom from public cares, which, however desirable, takes some time to realise; for, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that it was not till lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating when I awoke in the morning on the business of the ensuing day, and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, or had any thing to do with public transactions. I feel now, however, as I conceive a wearied traveller must do, who, after treading many a painful step with a heavy burthen on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the home to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back and tracing with an eager eye the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way, and into which none but the all-powerful guide and dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

But this repose was not unbroken by the public voice. A multitude of addresses, composed of congratulations and thanks, poured in upon him from all parts of the United States; while still more substantial marks of the respect of his country were offered him by the legislature. The Congress unanimously resolved that an equestrian statue of their beloved general should be cast in bronze and erected at the place which should be fixed on as the future seat of Congress. On the upper part of the front of the pedestal was engraved as follows:—

"THE UNITED STATES IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED
ORDERED THIS STATUE
TO BE ERECTED IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1783,
IN HONOR OF
GEORGE WASHINGTON,
THE ILLUSTRIOUS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
OF
THE ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
DURING THE WAR WHICH VINDICATED AND SECURED THEIR
LIBERTY, SOVEREIGNTY, AND INDEPENDENCE."

The legislature of Virginia, at their first session after his resignation, passed the following resolution:

RESOLVED—"That the Executive be requested to take measures for procuring a statue of GENERAL WASHINGTON, to be of the finest marble and best workmanship, with the following inscription on its pedestal:—

"THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, HAVE CAUSED
THIS STATUE
TO BE ERECTED, AS A MONUMENT OF AFFECTION AND GRATITUDE
TO
GEORGE WASHINGTON,
WHO, UNITING TO THE ENDOWMENTS OF THE HERO THE VIRTUES
OF THE PATRIOT,
AND EXERTING BOTH IN ESTABLISHING THE LIBERTIES
OF HIS COUNTRY,
HAS RENDERED HIS NAME DEAR TO HIS FELLOW-CITIZENS,
AND GIVEN THE WORLD
AN IMMORTAL EXAMPLE OF TRUE GLORY."

Whilst the public were thus eagerly showing their admiration of General Washington, he was busily engaged in those studies by which he eventually became one of the first agriculturists of his day. No improvements either in the structure of implements or the mode of culture escaped his attention; and he corresponded extensively with some of the principal men engaged in similar pursuits, both in Europe and America. One of his principal correspondents in England was the well-known Arthur Young, who subsequently published his letters in a small volume in 1801. These letters would be uninteresting to the general reader, but for the amusing nature of the contrast between the eloquent and even sublime correspondence which has already appeared in these pages, and the treatises which we here find from the same pen, and written with almost equal interest, on the best method of fatting hogs, the current price of tallow, and of different kinds of grain and meat, with disquisitions on poultry, carrots, and Timothy. Yet even here there are not wanting some passages, which indicate that a great mind was at work, though on comparatively trifling subjects.

From this curious correspondence it appears that the farms under his cultivation contained no less than three thousand two hundred and sixty acres of cultivable land, besides the mansion-house farm on which the residence of Mount Vernon was situated. The delight he felt in the culture of this property may be learned from the following passage, which occurs in one of his letters to Mr. Young:—

"The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs, the better I am pleased with them; inso-

much, that I can no where find so great satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits. In indulging these feelings, I am led to reflect how much more delightful to an undebauched mind, is the task of making improvements on the earth, than all the vain glory which can be acquired from ravaging it by the most uninterrupted career of conquests. The design of this observation is only to show how much, as a member of human society, I feel myself obliged, by your labours to render respectable and advantageous, an employment which is more congenial to the natural dispositions of mankind than any other."

Indeed the general's love of privacy seems almost to have been carried to an extreme; insomuch that he testifies some unwillingness even to have publicity given to his agricultural views. In a letter to Mr. Young the following remarks occur upon this point:—

"As to what you suggest at the close of your letter, respecting the publication of extracts from my correspondence in your Annals, I hardly know what to say. I certainly highly approve the judicious execution of your well-conceived project of throwing light on a subject, which may be more conducive than almost any other to the happiness of mankind. On the one hand, it seems scarcely generous or proper, that any farmer, who receives benefit from the facts contained in such publications, should withhold his mite of information from the general stock. On the other hand, I am afraid it might be imputed to me as a piece of ostentation, if my name should appear in the work. And surely it would not be discreet for me to run the hazard of incurring this imputation, unless

good might probably result to society, as some kind of compensation for it. Of this I am not a judge—I can only say for myself, that I have endeavoured, in a state of tranquil retirement, to keep myself as much from the eye of the world as I possibly could. I have studiously avoided, as much as was in my power, to give any cause for ill-natured or impertinent comments on my conduct: and I should be very unhappy to have any thing done on my behalf (however distant in itself from impropriety) which should give occasion for one officious tongue to use my name with indelicacy. For I wish most devoutly to glide silently and unnoticed through the remainder of life. This is my heartfelt wish; and these are my undisguised feelings. After having submitted them confidentially to you, I have such a reliance upon your prudence, as to leave it with you to do what you think, upon a full consideration of the matter, shall be wisest and best."

His views on the general character of American husbandry may be learned from the following very acute remarks:—

"An English farmer must entertain a contemptible opinion of our husbandry, or a horrid idea of our lands, when he shall be informed that not more than eight or ten bushels of wheat is the yield of an acre; but this low produce may be ascribed, and principally too, to a cause which I do not find touched by either of the gentlemen whose letters are sent to you, namely, that the aim of the farmers in this country (if they can be called farmers) is, not to make the most they can from the land, which is, or has been, cheap, but the most of the labour, which is dear; the conse-

quence of which has been, much ground has been scratched over, and none cultivated or improved as it ought to have been; whereas a farmer in England, where land is dear, and labour cheap, finds it his interest to improve and cultivate highly, that he may reap large crops from a small quantity of ground. That the last is the true, and the first an erroneous policy, I will readily grant; but it requires time to conquer bad habits, and hardly any thing short of necessity is able to accomplish it. That necessity is approaching by pretty rapid strides."

The life of General Washington at Mount Vernon might seem at first sight to be one of perfect retirement. This, however, was by no means the case; and, in a letter to a military friend, he thus expresses his concern upon this point:—

"It is not, my dear Sir, the letters of my friends which give me trouble, or add aught to my perplexity. I receive them with pleasure, and pay as much attention to them as my avocations will permit. It is references to old matters with which I have nothing to do; applications which oftentimes cannot be complied with; inquiries to satisfy which would employ the pen of an historian; letters of compliment, as unmeaning, perhaps, as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to; and the common-place business, which employ my pen and my time, often disagreeably. Indeed these, with company, deprive me of exercise; and unless I can obtain relief, must be productive of disagreeable consequences. Already, I begin to feel their effects. Heavy and painful oppressions of the head, and other disagreeable sensations often trouble me. I am therefore determined to employ some person

who shall ease me of the drudgery of this business. To correspond with those I love is among my highest gratifications. Letters of friendship require no study; the communications they contain flow with ease; and allowances are expected and are made. But this is not the case with those which require research, consideration, and recollection."

The difficulties here complained of were subsequently much diminished by the engagement of a young friend of good education as his secretary.

But it was impossible that the general, attached as he was to the pursuits of agriculture, should entirely withdraw his attention from objects of public utility, and the improvement of the inland navigation of the United States was the first to which it was directed. In 1784, he made a tour into the western country, and collecting there the topographical information which he needed, he developed to Mr. Harrison, then governor of Virginia, a scheme to secure the trade of the west to Virginia and Maryland by the improved navigation of the rivers James and Potomac, and by the opening of other inland navigations.

"I am not," said he, "for discouraging the exertions of any state to draw the commerce of the western country to its sea-ports. The more communications we open to it, the closer we bind that rising world (for it indeed may be so called) to our interests, and the greater strength shall we acquire by it. Those to whom nature affords the best communication, will, if they are wise, enjoy the greatest share of the trade. All I would be understood to mean, therefore, is, that the gifts of Providence may not be neglected." But political motives had higher influence in this transaction

than commercial. "I need not remark to you, Sir," said he in his communication to the governor of Virginia, "that the flanks and rear of the United States are possessed by other powers, and formidable ones too; nor need I press the necessity of applying the cement of interest to bind all parts of the union together by indissoluble bonds; especially of binding that part of it which lies immediately west of us, to the middle states. For what ties, let me ask, should we have upon those people, how entirely unconnected with them shall we be, and what troubles may we not apprehend if the Spaniards, on their right, and Great Britain, on their left, instead of throwing impediments in their way as they now do, should hold out lures for their trade and alliance? When they get strength, which will be sooner than most people conceive, what will be the consequence of their having formed close commercial connexions with both, or either of those powers, it needs not, in my opinion, the gift of prophecy to foretel.

"The western settlers (I speak now from my own observations) stand as it were upon a pivot. The touch of a feather would turn them any way. Until the Spaniards (very unwisely as I think) threw difficulties in their way, they looked down the Mississippi; and they looked that way for no other reason than because they could gently glide down the stream, without considering, perhaps, the fatigues of the voyage back again, and the time necessary for its performance; and because they have no other means of coming to us, but by a long land transportation through unimproved roads."

"Extend," said he in his letter to the governor

of Maryland, "the inland navigation of the eastern waters, communicate them as near as possible with those which run westward, open these to the Ohio, open all such as extend from the Ohio towards Lake Erie, and we shall not only draw the produce of the western settlers but the peltry and fur trade of the lakes also to our ports, thus adding an immense increase to our exports, and binding those people to us by a chain which never can be broken."

These representations were entirely successful, and companies were formed for the execution of the general plans, of which he consented to become the president. Upon this, the legislature of Virginia came to a resolution to present to him one hundred and fifty shares in each company. This resolution was prefaced by the following flattering preamble:—

"Whereas it is the desire of the Representatives of this Commonwealth to embrace every suitable occasion of testifying their sense of the unexampled merits of George Washington Esquire towards his country; and it is their wish in particular that those great works for its improvement which, both as springing from the liberty which he has been so instrumental in establishing, and as encouraged by his patronage, will be durable monuments of his glory, may be made monuments also of the gratitude of his country; be it enacted, &c."

Gratifying as this testimony of esteem doubtless was to the mind of Washington, it involved him in some embarrassment. He considered his acceptance of it as a departure from the governing principle of his public conduct—that of receiving no pecuniary remuneration for his services. To the

gentleman who communicated this measure to him he disclosed his sentiments on the subject in the following reply:—

"DEAR SIR,

"It is not easy for me to decide by which my mind was most affected upon the receipt of your letter of the sixth instant—surprise or gratitude. Both were greater than I had words to express. The attention and good wishes which the assembly has evinced by their act for vesting in me one hundred and fifty shares in the navigation of the rivers Potomac and James, is more than mere compliment. There is an unequivocal and substantial meaning annexed. But, believe me, Sir, no circumstance has happened since I left the walks of public life which has so much embarrassed me. On the one hand, I consider this act, as I have already observed, as a noble and unequivocal proof of the good opinion, the affection, and disposition of my country to serve me; and I should be hurt, if by declining the acceptance of it, my refusal should be construed into disrespect, or the smallest slight upon the general intention of the Legislature; or that an ostentatious display of disinterestedness, or public virtue, was the source of refusal.

"On the other hand, it is really my wish to have my mind and my actions, which are the result of reflection, as free and independent as the air, that I may be more at liberty (in things which my opportunities and experience have brought me to the knowledge of) to express my sentiments, and, if necessary, to suggest what may occur to me, under the fullest conviction that, although my

judgment may be arraigned, there will be no suspicion that sinister motives had the smallest influence in the suggestion. Not content then with the bare consciousness of my having in all this navigation business, acted upon the clearest conviction of the political importance of the measure, I would wish that every individual who may hear that it was a favourite plan of mine, may know also that I had no other motive for promoting it than the advantage of which I conceived it would be productive to the union at large, and to this state in particular, by cementing the eastern and western territory together, at the same time that it will give vigour and increase to our commerce, and be a convenience to our citizens.

"How would this matter be viewed then by the eye of the world, and what opinion would be formed when it comes to be related that G—— W———n exerted himself to effect this work, and that G—— W———n has received *twenty thousand dollars*, and *five thousand pounds* sterling of the public money as an interest therein? Would not this (if I am entitled to any merit for the part I have performed, and without it there is no foundation for the act) deprive me of the principal thing which is laudable in my conduct? Would it not in some respects be considered in the same light as a pension? And would not the apprehension of this induce me to offer my sentiments in future with the more reluctance? In a word, under whatever pretence, and however customary these gratuities may be in other countries, should I not thenceforward be considered as a dependent? One moment's thought of which would give me more pain than I should receive pleasure from the pro-

duct of all the tolls, were every farthing of them vested in me."

Impressed with these sentiments he declined the offer in a letter to the General Assembly in the following terms:—

"When I was first called to the station with which I was honoured during the late conflict for our liberties, to the diffidence which I had so many reasons to feel in accepting it, I thought it my duty to join a firm resolution to shut my hand against every pecuniary recompense. To this resolution I have invariably adhered, and from it (if I had the inclination) I do not consider myself at liberty now to depart.

"Whilst, therefore, I repeat my fervent acknowledgements to the legislature for their very kind sentiments and intentions in my favour, and at the same time beg them to be persuaded that a remembrance of this singular proof of their goodness towards me will never cease to cherish returns of the warmest affection and gratitude, I must pray that their act, so far as it has for its object my personal emolument, may not have its effects, but if it should please the General Assembly to permit me to turn the destination of the fund vested in me from my private emolument to objects of a public nature, it will be my study in selecting these to prove the sincerity of my gratitude for the honour conferred upon me by preferring such as may appear most subservient to the enlightened and patriotic views of the legislature."

Into these views the legislature fully entered, and the property was accordingly employed in the establishment of two colleges, the one on the banks of the Potomac, and the other on the banks of the James.

By degrees the concern and exertions of General Washington were extended to more and more public affairs, and the next object to which they were directed was a military society called "The Society of the Cincinnati." This society had its origin in laudable and natural sentiments. The officers of the American army, after their military labours had been brought to a successful termination, were desirous of continuing their intercourse and their associated character. For this purpose, and for the purpose of promoting the principles for which they had fought, and of affording charitable assistance to needy officers and their families, they enrolled themselves as members of this society. The right of membership was to descend to their eldest sons, other individuals of distinction were to be eligible as honorary associates, and certain honourable insignia were fixed on to distinguish its members.

In ancient states and under monarchical forms of government such a society would have been viewed with indifference if not with respect; but in America its rise and progress occasioned a very different sentiment. The most eminent patriots in the United States were persuaded that they saw in its constitution the germ of an hereditary aristocracy. They were further persuaded that in England, the imperfect representation of the people, which had occasioned distress, humiliation, misrule, and insupportable debt, was clearly traceable to that cause. They saw in every approach to the system of hereditary distinctions, the prognostics of the introduction of arbitrary power into the public transactions of the state and the private relations of society. They thought they descried

in the gloomy distance restraints upon the freedom of opinion, the establishment of a certain form of religious belief, penal disabilities for dissent, ecclesiastical corruption and irresponsible legislation.

The military character of the institution occasioned still further alarm from the power which would necessarily belong to it in this character. The horrors of military despotism, the curse of a standing army at the back of an irresponsible legislature, the growth of a class, absolved, by the accident of birth, from the necessity of seeking distinction by the ordinary paths of labour, honesty and talent;—born into the lap of pride, and placed amidst the snares of indolence, appalled them with the most serious apprehensions; while their ministers and well-wishers in Europe eagerly responded their sentiments. If so long ago as the year 1775 (for in this case time may be measured by events) their illustrious advocate, Mr. Burke, could describe them as "judging of the pressure of the *grievance* by the badness of the *principle*—as auguring misgovernment *at a distance*, and snuffing the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze," it is not surprising that after such experience, and possessed of so many more interests over which to be jealous, they should shrink from the principles on which the "Society of the Cincinnati" had been undesignedly constructed.

It would have been impossible on public grounds for General Washington to view this universal excitement or its causes without apprehension; but he was also in some degree personally interested, as, until their first General Meeting, which was to be held at Philadelphia in May, 1784, he

had been appointed the temporary President. He immediately exerted his influence among the officers to induce them to alter the obnoxious features of their institution, and, at the meeting referred to, the hereditary principle and the power to adopt honorary members were expunged from its constitution.

These slight interruptions of the public peace arose from casual causes. But there were some others in operation of a vital and necessary kind, and which had their spring in the innermost foundations of the political system of the country. Very soon after the recognition of American independence, it became obvious that there were some unseen obstacles to that prosperity which was expected to result from self-government; and after a short attempt to administer the existing system, it was obvious to all that public credit was sinking and the affairs of the infant state rapidly approaching a crisis. A government, says Judge Marshall, authorised to declare war, but relying on independent states for the means of prosecuting it, capable of contracting debts and of pledging the public faith for their payment, but depending on thirteen distinct sovereignties for the preservation of that faith, could only be rescued from ignominy and contempt by finding those sovereignties administered by men exempt from the passions incident to human nature. The debts of the Union were computed to amount on the 1st of January, 1783, to somewhat more than fifty millions of dollars.

The great object of Congress was "to restore and support public credit;" for effecting which it was necessary "to obtain from the states sub-

stantial funds for funding the whole debt of the United States."

These funds were to be raised in part by duties on imported articles, and in part by internal taxes, in apportioning which the population of each state was to be the measure of its contribution. Time after time the necessity of this revenue system was pressed by the federal government on the several states. In the course of the year 1786, every state in the union had acted on the recommendation except New York. This state rejected it to the last, and thus perished the effort to "obtain from the states the means of preserving in whole or in part the faith of the nation."

The distress of mind and disappointment which General Washington felt on this occasion, and the shame with which he blushed on perceiving how unworthy his countrymen were of all that he had achieved for them, are feelingly pourtrayed in the following passage from one of his letters, dated October, 1785.

"The war, as you have very justly observed, has terminated most advantageously for America, and a fair field is presented to our view; but I confess to you freely, my dear sir, that I think we do not possess wisdom or justice enough to cultivate it properly. Illiberality, jealousy, and local policy mix too much in all our public councils for the good government of the Union. In a word, the confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance, and Congress a nugatory body, their ordinances being little attended to.—To me it is a solecism in politics,—indeed, it is one of the most extraordinary things

in nature, that we should confederate as a nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation, who are the creatures of our own making, appointed for a limited and a short duration, and who are amenable for every action, recallable at any moment, and subject to all the evils they may be instrumental in producing, sufficient powers to order and direct the affairs of the same. By such policy as this the wheels of government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation, which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness.

"That we have it in our power to become one of the most respectable nations upon earth admits, in my humble opinion, of no doubt, if we would but pursue a wise, just, and liberal policy towards one another, and would keep good faith with the rest of the world. That our resources are ample and increasing none can deny, but while they are grudgingly applied, or not applied at all, we give a vital stab to public faith, and shall sink in the eyes of Europe into contempt."

CHAPTER XI.

Efforts of the Friends of General Washington to bring him into public Life—His Replies—He is elected a Member of the Convention at Philadelphia—His Correspondence on the Subject, and eventual Consent—Rebellion in Massachussetts—Results of the Convention—Correspondence with General Washington respecting the Office of President.

At length the danger of the crisis alarmed the most indifferent, and directed the eyes of all to General Washington, who had so frequently come to the relief of his country in the time of extremity. These sentiments were disclosed to the General in the early part of the year 1786, by Mr. Jay, who will be remembered as one of the principal senators by whom the affairs of America were guided during the revolutionary contest.

"You have wisely retired," says he, in a letter to the general, "from public employments, and calmly view from the temple of fame the various exertions of that sovereignty and independence, which Providence has enabled you to be so greatly and gloriously instrumental in securing to your country: yet I am persuaded that you cannot view them with the eye of an unconcerned spectator.

"Experience has pointed out errors in our national government which call for correction, and which threaten to blast the fruit we expected from the tree of liberty. An opinion begins to prevail,

that a general convention for revising the articles of confederation would be expedient. Whether the people are yet ripe for such a measure, or whether the system proposed to be obtained by it is only to be expected from calamity and commotion, is difficult to ascertain.

"I think we are in a delicate situation, and a variety of considerations and circumstances give me uneasiness. It is in contemplation to take measures for forming a general convention. The plan is not matured. If it should be well connected and take effect, I am fervent in my wishes that it may comport with the line of life you have marked out for yourself, to favour your country with your counsels on such an important and *single* occasion.

"Our affairs seem to lead to some crisis, something that I cannot foresee or conjecture. I am uneasy and apprehensive, more so than during the war. *Then* we had a fixed object; and though the means and time of obtaining it were problematical, yet I did firmly believe that we should ultimately succeed, because I did firmly believe that justice was with us. The case is now altered. We are going and doing wrong, and therefore I look forward to evils and calamities, but without being able to guess at the instrument, nature, or measure of them.

"That we shall again recover, and things again go well, I have no doubt. Such a variety of circumstances would not, almost miraculously, have combined to liberate and make us a nation, for transient and unimportant purposes. I therefore believe that we are yet to become a great and respectable people, but when or how, only the spirit of prophecy can discern.

"What I most fear is, that the better kind of people (by which I mean the people who are orderly and industrious, who are content with their situations, and not uneasy in their circumstances) will be led by the insecurity of property, the loss of confidence in their rulers, and the want of public faith and rectitude, to consider the charms of liberty as imaginary and delusive. A state of uncertainty and fluctuation must disgust and alarm such men, and prepare their minds for almost any change that may promise them quiet and security."

To these weighty communications General Washington replied:—

"Your sentiments that our affairs are drawing rapidly to a crisis, accord with my own. What the event will be, is also beyond the reach of my foresight. We have errors to correct *; we have probably had too good an opinion of human nature, in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us that men will not adopt and carry into execution measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of coercive power. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation, without lodging somewhere a power which will pervade the whole union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the state governments extends over the several states. To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body is, with ample

* I venture to point the special attention of the reader to the following line of argument and particularly to the abstract position with which it commences. It appears to me to be distinguished by a profundity of wisdom, which, considering the quarter from which it comes, is scarcely to be surpassed in any writings which the most eminent statesmen have ever given to the world.

authorities for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular absurdity and madness. Could Congress exert them for the detriment of the people, without injuring themselves in an equal or greater proportion? Are not their interests inseparably connected with those of their constituents? By the rotation of appointments, must they not mingle frequently with the mass of citizens? Is it not rather to be apprehended, if they were not possessed of the powers before described, that the individual members would be induced to use them, on many occasions, very timidly and inefficaciously, for fear of losing their popularity and future election? We must take human nature as we find it; perfection falls not to the share of mortals.

"What then is be done? Things cannot go on in the same strain for ever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people being disgusted with these circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme to another. To anticipate and prevent disastrous contingencies, would be the part of wisdom and patriotism.

"What astonishing changes a few years are capable of producing! I am told, that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence to acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! What a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! What a triumph for the advocates of despotism, to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems, founded on the

basis of equal liberty, are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend.

"Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on the sea of troubles.

"Nor could it be expected that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight on the minds of my countrymen. They have been neglected, though given as a last legacy in a most solemn manner. I then perhaps had some claims to public attention. I consider myself as having none at present."

Similar sentiments to those which the general here expresses, were transmitted to him from the Marquis de la Fayette, then at the court of Prussia, as equally impressing the mind of the illustrious monarch whom he was visiting and his own. The plan of a convention was gradually matured, and at length it was appointed to meet at Philadelphia in May 1787. Although the general had explicitly declined becoming a candidate for the representation, yet the Assembly of Virginia unanimously elected him as their representative. The appointment was signified to him by the governor, Mr. Randolph, in a letter which closes with the following words:—

"I freely then entreat you to accept the unanimous appointment of the General Assembly to the Convention at Philadelphia. For the gloomy pros-

pect still admits one ray of hope, that those who began, carried on, and consummated the revolution, can yet restore America from the impending ruin."

"Sensible as I am," said the general in his answer, "of the honour conferred on me by the General Assembly of this commonwealth, in appointing me one of the deputies to a convention proposed to be held in the city of Philadelphia in May next, for the purpose of revising the federal constitution; and desirous as I am on all occasions of testifying a ready obedience to the calls of my country — yet, Sir, there exist at this moment circumstances which I am persuaded will render this fresh instance of confidence incompatible with other measures which I had previously adopted, and from which, seeing little prospect of disengaging myself, it would be disingenuous not to express a wish that some other character, on whom greater reliance can be had, may be substituted in my place, the probability of my non-attendance being too great to continue my appointment.

"As no mind can be more deeply impressed than mine is with the critical situation of our affairs, resulting in a great measure from the want of efficient powers in the federal head, and due respect to its ordinances, so consequently those who do engage in the important business of removing these defects, will carry with them every good wish of mine, which the best dispositions towards their obtainment can bestow."

His resignation not being accepted, he gave his best attention to the great points which were to come under discussion. The more, however, he studied them the less became his confidence in the

fitness of his countrymen for any form of government which he should deem efficient.

"I must candidly confess," said he, in a letter to Colonel Humphreys, "as we could not remain quiet more than three or four years in times of peace under the constitutions of our own choosing, which were believed in many states to have been formed with deliberation and wisdom, I see little prospect either of our agreeing on any other, or that we should remain long satisfied under it if we could. Yet I would wish any thing, and every thing, essayed to prevent the effusion of blood, and to divert the humiliating and contemptible figure we are about to make in the annals of mankind."

At length, however, an event occurred which speedily determined him to join the Convention. This was an alarming eruption of anarchy in Massachussetts. The cause of the insurrection appears to have been the feebleness of the executive government, and the object of the insurgents was not so much the redress of particular grievances as the rejection of all legal restraint, and the abolition of all debts, public and private. Upon hearing of these disturbances, the mind of General Washington appears to have been unusually agitated by grief, alarm, and indignation. "For God's sake, tell me," said he, in a letter to Colonel Humphreys, "what is the cause of all these commotions? Do they proceed from licentiousness, British influence disseminated by the tories, or real grievances which admit of redress? If the latter, why was redress delayed until the public mind had become so much agitated? If the former, why are not the powers of government tried at once? It is as well to be without as not to exercise them. Commotions of this sort, like

snow-balls, gather strength as they roll, if there is no opposition in the way to divide and crumble them."

To General Knox he writes, "I feel infinitely more than I can express to you, for the disorders which have arisen in these states. Good God! who besides a tory could have foreseen, or a Briton have predicted them? I do assure you, that even at this moment, when I reflect upon the present aspect of our affairs, it seems to me like the visions of a dream. My mind can scarcely realise it as a thing in actual existence—so strange, so wonderful, does it appear to me. In this, as in most other matters, we are too slow. When this spirit first dawned, it might probably have been easily checked: but it is scarcely within the reach of human ken at this moment to say when, where, or how, it will terminate. There are combustibles in every state, to which a spark might set fire. In bewailing, which I have often done with the keenest sorrow, the death of our much lamented friend General Greene, I have accompanied my regrets of late with a query whether he would not have preferred such an exit, to the scenes which it is more than probable many of his compatriots may live to bemoan."

From Colonel Lee he even received an intimation that individuals of influence in the disturbed district were desirous of his presence, and the exertion of his influence to quell the tumult. In reply, the General wrote as follows:—

"The picture which you have exhibited, and the accounts which are published of the commotions and temper of numerous bodies in the eastern country, present a state of things equally to be

lamented and deprecated. They exhibit a melancholy ve ification of what our transatlantic foes have predicted; and of another thing which, perhaps, is still more to be regretted, and is yet more unaccountable, that mankind, when left to themselves, are unfit for their own government. I am mortified beyond expression when I view the clouds which have spread over the brightest morn that ever dawned upon any country. In a word, I am lost in amazement when I behold what intrigue, the interested views of desperate characters, and the ignorance and jealousy of the minor part are capable of effecting as a scourge on the major part of our fellow citizens of the union; for it is hardly to be supposed that the great body of the people, though they will not act, can be so short-sighted or enveloped in darkness as not to see the rays of a distant sun through all this mist of intoxication and folly."

"You talk, my good Sir, of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found, nor if attainable, that it would be a proper remedy for these disorders. *Influence* is not *government*. Let us have a *government* by which our lives, liberties, and properties will be secured, or let us know the worst at once. Under these impressions, my humble opinion is, that there is a call for decision. Know then precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have *real* grievances, redress them if possible, or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it at the present moment. If they have not, employ the force of the government against them at once. If this is inadequate, all will be convinced that the superstructure

is bad, or wants support. To be more exposed in the eyes of the world, and more contemptible than we already are, is hardly possible. To delay one or the other of these expedients, is to exasperate on the one hand or to give confidence on the other, and will add to their numbers; for, like snow-balls, such bodies increase by every movement, unless there is something in the way to obstruct and crumble them, before their weight is too great and irresistible.

"These are my sentiments. Precedents are dangerous things. Let the reins of government then be braced, and held with a steady hand, and every violation of the constitution be reprehended. If defective let it be amended, but not suffered to be trampled upon while it has an existence."

A friend having intimated by letter his apprehension that civil discord was near, in which event he would be obliged to act a public part, or to leave the continent,—"It is," said the general in reply, "with the deepest and most heartfelt concern, I perceive, by some late paragraphs extracted from the Boston papers, that the insurgents of Massachusetts, far from being satisfied with the redress offered by their general court, are still acting in open violation of law and government, and have obliged the chief magistrate in a decided tone to call upon the militia of the state to support the constitution.

"What, gracious God, is man!—that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct. It is but the other day that we were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we live—constitutions of our own choice and making—and now we are unsheathing the sword to

overturn them. The thing is so unaccountable, that I hardly know how to realise it, or to persuade myself that I am not under the illusion of a dream. My mind, previous to the receipt of your letter of the first ultimo, had often been agitated by a thought similar to the one you expressed respecting a friend of yours: but Heaven forbid that a crisis should come when he shall be driven to the necessity of making a choice of either of the alternatives there mentioned."

To subdue this insurrection upwards of four thousand militia were placed under the command of General Lincoln, and after experiencing extreme sufferings from the severity of the season, they at length had the satisfaction of seeing the rebels dispersed, and the district restored to order.

Discouraging and distressing as these events undoubtedly were to every American patriot, they issued in one beneficial result. They served to show the importance of enlarging the powers of the general government, and thus prepared the public mind for the events which were to follow from the ensuing Convention. The assembly of this important body received, on the 21st of February, 1787, a more regular and legitimate character by the sanction of Congress. On that day they declared their conviction that it was expedient that a convention of delegates from the several states should meet for the purpose "of revising the articles of confederation, and reporting to Congress and the several legislatures such alterations and provisions therein as shall, when agreed to in Congress and confirmed by the states, render the federal constitution adequate to the exigencies of government and the preservation of the union."

The Convention accordingly met at the time appointed, and was composed of the delegates from twelve of the thirteen states, Rhode Island alone having stood out obstinately against the highest interests of the country. General Washington was unanimously chosen their president, and they then proceeded with closed doors to the momentous business submitted to them. The result of their deliberations was the presentation to America of the constitution under which she has subsequently flourished. This constitution was afterwards accepted and ratified by the Conventions of eleven states (Rhode Island and North Carolina having refused their assent to it), and measures were immediately commenced for bringing it into full operation.

In the provisions of this constitution an entirely new and most responsible office was involved—that of "President of the United States," and immediately on its reception, all eyes were turned to the only man who could fulfil the untried duties of so high a station. It is scarcely necessary to say that that man was General Washington. Numerous applications poured in upon him from the most influential quarters, entreating him once more to sacrifice his well known predilections for private life to the vital interests of his country."

"I have ever thought," said Governor Morris, one of the most eminent members both of Congress and of the Convention, "and have ever said that you must be the president;—no other man can fill that office. No other man can draw forth the abilities of our country into the various departments of civil life. You alone can awe the insolence of opposing factions, and the greater insolence of

assuming adherents. I say nothing of foreign powers, nor of their ministers; with these last you will have some plague. As to your feelings on this occasion, they are, I know, both deep and affecting; you embark property most precious on a most tempestuous ocean: for as you possess the highest reputation, you expose it to the perilous chance of popular opinion. On the other hand, you will, I firmly expect, enjoy the inexpressible felicity of contributing to the happiness of all your countrymen. You will become the father of more than three millions of children, and, while your bosom glows with parental tenderness, in theirs, or at least in a majority of them, you will excite the duteous sentiments of filial affection. This, I repeat it, is what I firmly expect; and my views are not directed by that enthusiasm which your public character has impressed on the public mind. Enthusiasm is generally short-sighted and too often blind. I form my conclusions from those talents and virtues which the world believes and your friends know you possess."

These propositions placed General Washington in a position of much perplexity. His correspondence on the subject, which is peculiarly characteristic and interesting, will be presented to the reader in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

Correspondence of General Washington relative to the Presidency—Is elected President. His Journey to the seat of Government—Address presented to him at Alexandria—His reply—his Reception at New York.

We have now to regard the subject of these memoirs, compelled again to quit the retirement in which he was enjoying so much of grateful repose and domestic happiness, to encounter afresh the storms of public life. To this hard condition he yielded with the utmost reluctance, and was at length induced to go, solely by that unexampled disinterestedness with which he had through life sacrificed every private interest to the welfare of his country. These feelings will best be shown by the following correspondence. In a letter from Colonel Lee, we find the following observations:—

"The solemnity of the moment, and its application to yourself, have fixed my mind in contemplations of a public and personal nature, and I feel an involuntary impulse which I cannot resist, to communicate without reserve to you some of the reflections which the hour has produced. Solicitous for our common happiness as a people, and convinced, as I continue to be, that our peace and prosperity depend on the proper improvement of the present period, my anxiety is extreme, that the new government may have an auspicious begin-

ning. To effect this, and to perpetuate a nation formed under your auspices, it is certain you will again be called forth. The same principles of devotion to the good of mankind, which have invariably governed your conduct, will no doubt continue to rule your mind, however opposite their consequences may be to your repose and happiness. It may be wrong, but I cannot suppress in my wishes for national felicity a due regard for your personal fame and content.

"If the same success should attend your efforts on this important occasion which has distinguished you hitherto, then, to be sure, you will have spent a life which Providence rarely, if ever, before gave to the lot of man. It is my anxious hope, it is my belief, that this will be the case; but all things are uncertain, and perhaps nothing more so than political events.

"Without you, the government can have but little chance of success, and the people, of that happiness which its prosperity must yield."

To these communications the general thus replied:—

"Your observations on the solemnity of the crisis, and its application to myself, bring before me subjects of the most momentous and interesting nature. In our endeavours to establish a new general government, the contest, nationally considered, seems not to have been so much for glory as existence. It was for a long time doubtful whether we were to survive as an independent republic, or decline from our federal dignity into insignificant and wretched fragments of empire. The adoption of the constitution so extensively, and with so liberal an acquiescence on the part of

the minorities in general, promised the former; but lately, the circular letter of New York has manifested in my apprehension an unfavourable, if not an insidious tendency to a contrary policy. I still hope for the best; but before you mentioned it, I could not help fearing it would serve as a standard to which the disaffected could resort. It is now evidently the part of all honest men, who are friends to the new constitution, to endeavour to give it a chance to disclose its merits and defects by carrying it fairly into effect, in the first instance.

"The principal topic of your letter is to me a point of great delicacy indeed, insomuch that I can scarcely, without some impropriety, touch upon it. In the first place, the event to which you allude may never happen, among other reasons because, if the partiality of my fellow-citizens conceive it to be a mean by which the sinews of the new government would be strengthened, it will of consequence be obnoxious to those who are in opposition to it, many of whom, unquestionably, will be placed among the electors. This consideration alone would supersede the expediency of announcing any definitive and irrevocable resolution. You are among the small number of those who know my invincible attachment to domestic life, and that my sincerest wish is to continue in the enjoyment of it solely, until my final hour. But the world would be neither so well instructed, nor so candidly disposed, as to believe me to be uninfluenced by sinister motives in case any circumstance should render a deviation from the line of conduct I had prescribed for myself indispensable. Should the contingency you sug-

gest, take place, and (for argument's sake alone let me say) should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference for the reasons and opinions of my friends; might I not, after the declarations I have made (and Heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart), in the judgment of the impartial world, and of posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency, if not with rashness and ambition? Nay, further, would there not even be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now, justice to myself, and tranquillity of conscience require that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize as I ought the good opinion of my fellow-citizens, yet if I know myself, I would not seek popularity at the expense of one social duty, or moral virtue.

"While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my country, and myself, I could despise all the party clamour and unjust censure which must be expected from some, whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious, that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And certain I am, whensoever I shall be convinced that the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risk, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude.

"If I declined the task, it would be upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my increasing fondness for agri-

cultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen, yet it will be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, nor the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief that some other person, who had less pretence and less inclination to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself. To say more would be indiscreet: as the disclosure of a refusal beforehand might incur the application of the fable, in which the fox is represented as undervaluing the grapes he could not reach. You will perceive, my dear Sir, by what is here observed (and which you will be pleased to consider in the light of a confidential communication) that my inclinations will dispose and decide me to remain as I am; unless a clear and insurmountable conviction should be impressed on my mind, that some very disagreeable consequences must in all human probability result from the indulgence of my wishes."

To similar suggestions from Colonel Hamilton, General Washington replied. "On the delicate subject with which you conclude your letter I can say nothing; because the event alluded to may never happen, and because in case it should occur, it would be a point of prudence to defer forming one's ultimate and irrevocable decision, so long as new data might be afforded for one to act with greater wisdom and propriety. I would not wish to conceal my prevailing sentiment from you. For you know me well enough, my good Sir, to be persuaded that I am not guilty

of affectation, when I tell you it is my great and sole desire to live and die in peace and retirement on my own farm. Were it even indispensable a different line of conduct should be adopted, while you and some others who are acquainted with my heart would *acquit*, the world and posterity might probably *accuse* me of *inconsistency* and *ambition*. Still I hope, I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain (what I consider the most enviable of all titles) the character of *an honest man*.

"Although I could not help observing from several publications and letters that my name had been sometimes spoken of, and that it was possible the *contingency* which is the subject of your letter might happen, yet I thought it best to maintain a guarded silence, and to lack the counsel of my best friends (which I certainly hold in the highest estimation) rather than to hazard an imputation unfriendly to the delicacy of my feelings. For, situated as I am, I could hardly bring the question into the slightest discussion, or ask an opinion even in the most confidential manner, without betraying, in my judgment, some impropriety of conduct, or without feeling an apprehension that a premature display of anxiety, might be construed into a vain-glorious desire of pushing myself into notice as a candidate. Now, if I am not grossly deceived in myself, I should unfeignedly rejoice, in case the electors, by giving their votes in favour of some other person, would save me from the dreadful dilemma of being forced to accept or refuse. If that may not be, I am in the next place, earnestly desirous of searching out the truth, and of knowing whether there does not exist a

probability that the government would be just as happily and effectually carried into execution without my aid, as with it. I am truly solicitous to obtain all the previous information which the circumstances will afford, and to determine (when the determination can with propriety be no longer postponed) according to the principles of right reason, and the dictates of a clear conscience; without too great a reference to the unforseen consequences which may affect my person or reputation. Until that period, I may fairly hold myself open to conviction, though I allow your sentiments to have weight in them: and I shall not pass by your arguments without giving them as dispassionate a consideration as I can possibly bestow upon them.

"In taking a survey of the subject, in whatever point of light I have been able to place it, I will not suppress the acknowledgment, my dear Sir, that I have always felt a kind of gloom upon my mind, as often as I have been taught to expect I might, and perhaps must ere long be called to make a decision. You will, I am well assured, believe the assertion (though I have little expectation it would gain credit from those who are less acquainted with me) that if I should receive the appointment, and should be prevailed upon to accept it; the acceptance would be attended with more diffidence and reluctance than ever I experienced before in my life. It would be, however, with a fixed and sole determination of lending whatever assistance might be in my power to promote the public weal, in hopes that at a convenient and early period, my services might be dispensed with; and that I might be permitted once

more to retire—to pass an unclouded evening after the stormy day of life, in the bosom of domestic tranquillity."

Having received similar communications from his attached friend, General Lincoln, he expressed his views in these words:—

"I would willingly pass over in silence that part of your letter, in which you mention the persons who are candidates for the two first offices in the executive, if I did not fear the omission might seem to betray a want of confidence. Motives of delicacy have prevented me hitherto from conversing or writing on this subject, whenever I could avoid it with decency. I may, however, with great sincerity, and I believe without offending against modesty or propriety, say to *you*, that I most heartily wish the choice to which you allude might not fall upon me; and that if it should, I must reserve to myself the right of making up my final decision, at the last moment, when it can be brought into one view, and when the expediency or inexpediency of a refusal can be more judiciously determined than at present. But be assured, my dear Sir, if from any inducement I shall be persuaded ultimately to accept, it will not be (so far as I know my own heart) from any of a private or personal nature. Every personal consideration conspires to rivet me (if I may use the expression) to retirement. At my time of life, and under my circumstances, nothing in this world can ever draw me from it, unless it be a *conviction* that the partiality of my countrymen had made my services absolutely necessary, joined to a *fear* that my refusal might induce a belief that I preferred the conservation of my own reputation and private

ease, to the good of my country. After all, if I should conceive myself in a manner constrained to accept, I call Heaven to witness, that this very act would be the greatest sacrifice of my personal feelings and wishes, that ever I have been called upon to make. It would be to forego repose and domestic enjoyment for trouble, perhaps public obloquy; for I should consider myself as entering upon an unexplored field, enveloped on every side with clouds and darkness.

"From this embarrassing situation I had naturally supposed that my declarations at the close of the war would have saved me; and that my sincere intentions, then publicly made known, would have effectually precluded me for ever afterwards from being looked upon as a candidate for any office. This hope, as a last anchor of worldly happiness in old age, I had still carefully preserved; until the public papers and private letters from my correspondents in almost every quarter, taught me to apprehend that I might soon be obliged to answer the question, whether I would go again into public life or not."

To the Marquis de la Fayette, who wrote to him on the same subject, he replied as follows:—

"I can say little or nothing new, in consequence of the repetition of your opinion on the expediency there will be for my accepting the office to which you refer. Your sentiments, indeed, coincide much more nearly with those of my other friends than with my own feelings. In truth, my difficulties increase and magnify as I draw towards the period when, according to the common belief, it will be necessary for me to give a definitive answer in one way or other. Should circumstances render it in

a manner inevitably necessary to be in the affirmative, be assured, my dear Sir, I shall assume the task with the most unfeigned reluctance, and with a real diffidence, for which I shall probably receive no credit from the world. If I know my own heart, nothing short of a conviction of duty will induce me again to take an active part in public affairs; and in that case, if I can form a plan for my own conduct, my endeavours shall be unremittingly exerted (even at the hazard of my former fame, or present popularity) to extricate my country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled through want of credit, and to establish a general system of policy which, if pursued, will ensure permanent felicity to the commonwealth. I think I see a path as clear and as direct as a ray of light, which leads to the attainment of that object. Nothing but harmony, honesty, industry, and frugality are necessary to make us a great and happy people. Happily the present posture of affairs and the prevailing disposition of my countrymen, promise to co-operate in establishing those four great and essential pillars of public felicity."

At length, after almost incredible delays, arising from the dilatoriness with which the business of government had long been habitually conducted, the election of the President commenced on the 6th of April 1789, when General Washington was called to the supreme command by the unanimous and uninfluenced voice of the whole nation; all the hostility which existed in several states against the new government being unable to alienate one single vote from the founder of the nation. He was therefore declared elected as President; and the second number of votes falling on John Adams,

he was declared duly chosen as Vice-President. On this occasion General Washington wrote to General Knox a letter, from which the following characteristic passage is extracted :—

" I feel for those members of the new Congress who have hitherto given an unavailing attendance. For myself, the delay may be compared to a reprieve ; for in confidence I tell you (with the world it would obtain little credit) that my movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution ; so unwilling am I, in the evening of life, nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without that competency of political skill, abilities, and inclination, which are necessary to manage the helm. I am sensible that I am embarking the voice of the people, and a good name of my own, on this voyage ; but what returns will be made for them, heaven alone can foretell. Integrity and firmness are all I can promise ; these, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all men ; for of the consolations which are to be derived from these, under any circumstances, the world cannot deprive me."

On the 14th of April the announcement was officially made to him at Mount Vernon. Upon this he yielded to the voice of the legislature, merely replying, " I wish that there may not be reason for regretting the choice ; for, indeed, all I can promise is, to accomplish that which can be done by an honest zeal."

With his characteristic promptitude he left Mount Vernon for the seat of government on the

second day after the announcement of his election had been made to him. On that day, we find the following affecting entry in his diary. "About ten o'clock, I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York, in company with Mr. Thompson and Colonel Humphreys, with the best dispositions to render service to my country, in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

On leaving his residence, the chief desire of the General was to urge his journey with the utmost possible rapidity and privacy; but this wish was completely frustrated by the enthusiasm of his countrymen; the roads were every where obstructed by crowds who had assembled from all parts of the country round, eager to catch a glimpse of the farmer of Mount Vernon, and to pay their homage to their chief magistrate. Addresses were presented by the inhabitants of all the principal towns through which he passed. Triumphal arches were erected at all places through which his journey lay which had derived interest from his military exploits, while corps of militia and crowds of private gentlemen on horseback, composed his constant and ever-changing retinue. The most remarkable of the addresses which he received was from the citizens of Alexandria; and this with his reply, are too interesting to be withheld from the reader. The address was as follows:—

"TO GEORGE WASHINGTON, ESQUIRE, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, &c.

"Again your country demands your care. Obedient to its wishes, unmindful of your ease, we see you again relinquishing the bliss of retirement, and this too at a period of life when nature itself seems to authorise a preference of repose.

"Not to extol your glory as a soldier; not to pour forth our gratitude for past services; not to acknowledge the justice of the unexampled honour which has been conferred upon you by the spontaneous and unanimous suffrage of three millions of freemen, in your election to the supreme magistracy; nor to admire the patriotism which directs your conduct—do your neighbours and friends now address you; themes less splendid, but more endearing, impress our minds. The first and best of citizens must leave us; our aged must lose their ornament; our youth their model; our agriculture its improver; our commerce its friend; our infant academy its protector; our poor their benefactor; and the interior navigation of the Potowmack (an event replete with the most extensive utility, already by your unremitted exertions brought into partial use) its institutor and promoter.

"Farewell! Go, and make a grateful people happy—a people who will be doubly grateful, when they contemplate this recent sacrifice for their interest.

"To that Being who maketh and unmaketh at his will, we commend you; and, after the accomplishment of the arduous business to which you are called, may he restore to us again the best of men, and the most beloved fellow-citizen!"

To this Washington returned the following answer:—

"GENTLEMEN,

"Although I ought not to conceal, yet I cannot describe the painful emotions which I felt in being called upon to determine, whether I would accept or refuse the Presidency of the United States. The unanimity in the choice, the opinion of my friends, communicated from different parts of Europe as well as from America, the apparent wish of those who were not entirely satisfied with the constitution in its present form, and an ardent desire on my own part to be instrumental in connecting the good-will of my countrymen towards each other, have induced an acceptance. Those who know me best, (and you, my fellow-citizens, are from your situation in that number), know better than any others, my love of retirement is so great, that no earthly consideration short of a conviction of duty could have prevailed upon me to depart from my resolution, 'never more to take any share in transactions of a public nature;' for at my age and in my circumstances, what prospects or advantages can I propose to myself from embarking again on the tempestuous and uncertain ocean of public life?

"I do not feel myself under the necessity of making public declarations, in order to convince you, gentlemen, of my attachment to yourselves and regard for your interests. The whole tenor of my life has been open to your inspection, and my past actions, rather than my present declarations, must be the pledge of my future conduct.

"In the mean time, I thank you most sincerely for the expressions of kindness contained in your

valedictory address. It is true, just after having bade adieu to my domestic connexions. this tender proof of your friendship is but too well calculated still further to awaken my sensibility, and increase my regret at parting from the enjoyments of private life.

"All that now remains for me is to commit myself and you to the protection of that beneficent Being, who on a former occasion hath happily brought us together, after a long and distressing separation. Perhaps the same gracious Providence will again indulge me. Unutterable sensations must, then, be left to more expressive silence, while from an aching heart I bid you all, my affectionate friends and kind neighbours, farewell!"

At Brunswick he was met by the governor of New Jersey, who accompanied him to Elizabeth Town Point. On the road the committee of Congress received and conducted him with much military parade to the Point, where he took leave of the Governor of Jersey, and with the Committee of Congress, Mr. Thornton, and Colonel Humphreys, embarked for New York in an elegant barge of thirteen oars, manned with thirteen branch pilots, provided by the citizens of New York.

"The display of boats," says General Washington, in his journal, "which attended and joined on this occasion, some with vocal and others with instrumental music on board, the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people, which rent the sky as I passed along the wharfs, filled my mind with sensations as painful (contemplating the reverse of the

scene, which may be the case after all my labours to do good) as they were pleasing."

Thus, on the 28th of April, the general landed at the stairs on Murray's wharf, which had been ornamented for the occasion, where he was received by the Governor of New York, and conducted with military honours through an immense multitude of people to the apartments provided for him; and this joyful day was concluded by a general and splendid illumination.

CHAPTER XIII.

Proceedings in Congress relative to the Appointment of General Washington—His Inauguration and Address to the Senate —Their Reply—Suspicions and Jealousies excited by his Habits as President—His Vindication of himself in a Letter.

In the senate, the accession of General Washington to his new dignity was marked with observances scarcely less flattering. Two days before his arrival the vice-president, John Adams, who had taken a foremost position in the contest with Great Britain, took occasion to address the senate in his official capacity, and with much appropriateness congratulated them and the country upon the choice they had made.

"It is with satisfaction," said he, "that I congratulate the people of America on the formation of a national constitution, and the fair prospect of a consistent administration of a government of laws;—on the acquisition of a house of representatives chosen by themselves, of a senate thus composed by their own state legislatures, and on the prospect of the executive authority in the hands of one whose portrait I shall not presume to draw. Were I blessed with powers to do justice to his character it would be impossible to increase the confidence or affection of his country, or make the smallest addition to his glory. This can only be

effected by a discharge of the present exalted trust on the same principles with the same abilities and virtues which have uniformly appeared in all his former conduct, whether public or private. May I nevertheless be indulged to inquire, if we look over the catalogue of the first magistrates of nations, whether they have been denominated presidents or consuls, kings or princes, where shall we find one whose commanding talents and virtues, whose overruling good fortune have so completely united all hearts and voices in his favour? Who enjoyed the esteem and admiration of foreign nations and fellow-citizens with equal unanimity? Qualities so uncommon are no common blessing to the country that possesses them. By these great qualities and their benign effects, has Providence marked out the head of this nation with a hand so distinctly visible as to have been seen by all men, and mistaken by none."

On the arrival of the General, it was determined by Congress that the oath of office should be administered in an open gallery adjoining the hall of the Senate. Accordingly, on the 30th of April he attended, and in the view of a vast assemblage of people was constitutionally qualified for the administration of the government. After the ceremony, he repaired to the hall of Congress and delivered the following address to the two branches of the legislature.

"Fellow citizens of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives.

"Among the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties than that of which the notification was

transmitted by your order, and received on the 14th day of the present month. On the one hand, I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision as the asylum of my declining years. A retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruption in my health to the gradual waste committed on it by time. On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens, a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence one who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies. In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance by which it might be affected. All I dare hope is, that if in accepting this task I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof of the confidence of my fellow-citizens, and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cases before me, my error will be palliated by the motives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my country with some share of the partiality in which they originated.

"Such being the impressions under which I have,

in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station, it would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this first official act, my fervent supplication to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the United States, a government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes, and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own, nor those of my fellow-citizens at large less than either. No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. And in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their united government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude, along with an humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seem to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join with me, I trust, in thinking that there are none under the influence

of which the proceedings of a new and free government can more auspiciously commence.

"By the article establishing the executive department, it is made the duty of the President 'to recommend to your consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.' The circumstances under which I now meet you, will acquit me from entering into that subject further than to refer you to the great constitutional charter under which we are assembled, and which in defining your powers, designates the objects to which your attention is to be given. It will be more consistent with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actuate me, to substitute in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute which is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism which adorn the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honourable qualifications, I behold the surest pledges, that as on one side no local prejudices or attachments, no separate views nor party animosities, will misdirect the comprehensive and equal eye which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests, so on another, that the foundations of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality, and the pre-eminence of a free government be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens, and command the respect of the world.

"I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love of my country can inspire, since there is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the economy and course of nature an indissoluble union between virtue and

happiness—between duty and advantage—between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity; since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained: and, since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered as *deeply*, perhaps as *finally* staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.

"Besides the ordinary objects submitted to your care, it will remain with your judgment to decide, how far an exercise of the occasional power delegated by the fifth article of the constitution, is rendered expedient at the present juncture by the nature of objections which have been urged against the system, or by the degree of inquietude which has given birth to them. Instead of undertaking particular recommendations, in which I could be guided by no lights derived from official opportunities, I shall again give way to my entire confidence in your discernment and pursuit of the public good; for I assure myself that whilst you carefully avoid every alteration which might endanger the benefits of an united and effective government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience, a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen, and a regard for the public harmony, will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question, how far the former can be more impregnably fortified, or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted.

"To the preceding observations I have one to add, which will be most properly addressed to the House of Representatives; it concerns myself, and will, therefore, be as brief as possible. When I was first honoured with a call into the service of my country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty required that I should renounce every pecuniary consideration. From this resolution I have in no instance departed; and being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline as inapplicable to myself, any share in the personal emoluments which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the executive department; and must, accordingly, pray that the pecuniary estimates for the station in which I am placed, may, during my continuation in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require.

"Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave, but not without resorting once more to the benign parent of the human race, in humble supplication, that since he has been pleased to favour the American people with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquillity, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity on a form of government for the security of their union and the advancement of their happiness, so this divine blessing, may be equally *conspicuous* in the enlarged views, the temperate consultation, and the wise measures on which the success of this government must depend."

The answer of the senate was highly respectful and affectionate.

"The unanimous suffrage of the elective body in your favour is peculiarly expressive of the gratitude, confidence, and affection of the citizens of America, and is the highest testimonial at once of your merit and their esteem. We are sensible, Sir, that nothing but the voice of your fellow-citizens could have called you from a retreat chosen by the fondest predilection, endeared by habit, and consecrated to the repose of declining years. We rejoice, and with us all America, that in obedience to the call of our common country, you have returned once more to public life. In you, all parties confide; in you all interests unite; and we have no doubt that your past services, great as they have been, will be equalled by your future exertions, and that your prudence and sagacity, as a statesman, will tend to avert the dangers to which we are exposed, to give stability to the present government, and dignity and splendour to that country, which your skill and valour as a soldier so eminently contributed to raise to independence and empire.

"When we contemplate the coincidence of circumstances and wonderful combination of causes which gradually prepared the people of this country for independence; when we contemplate the rise, progress, and termination of the late war, which gave them a name among the nations of the earth; we are, with you, unavoidably led to acknowledge and adore the great Arbiter of the universe, by whom empires rise and fall. A review of the many signal instances of divine interposition in

favour of this country, claims our most pious gratitude. And permit me, Sir, to observe, that among the great events which have led to the formation and establishment of a federal government, we esteem your acceptance of the office of President as one of the most propitious and important."

The answer of the House of Representatives was as follows:—

"The Representatives of the people of the United States present their congratulations on the event by which your fellow-citizens have attested the pre-eminence of your merit. You have long held the first place in their esteem; you have often received tokens of their affection; you now possess the only proof that remained of their gratitude for your services, of their reverence for your wisdom, and of their confidence in your virtues. You enjoy the highest, because the truest honour, of the first magistrate, by the unanimous choice of the freest people on the face of the earth.

"We well know the anxieties with which you must have obeyed the summons from the repose reserved for your declining years into public scenes, of which you had taken your leave for ever; but obedience was due to the occasion. It is already applauded by the universal joy which welcomes you to your station, and we cannot doubt that it will be rewarded with all the satisfaction with which an ardent love for your fellow-citizens must review successful efforts to promote their happiness. This anticipation is not justified merely by the past experience of your signal services, it is particularly suggested by the pious impressions under which you commence your administration, and the enlightened

maxims by which you mean to conduct it. We feel with you the strongest obligations to adore the invisible hand which has led the American people through so many difficulties, to cherish a conscious responsibility for the destiny of republican liberty, and to seek the only sure means of preserving and recommending the precious deposit in a system of legislation founded on the principles of an honest policy, and directed by the spirit of a diffusive patriotism.

"In forming the pecuniary provisions for the executive department, we shall not lose sight of a wish resulting from motives which give it a peculiar claim to our regard. Your resolution, in a moment essential to the liberties of your country, to renounce all personal emolument, was among the many presages of your patriotic services which have been amply fulfilled; and your scrupulous adherence now to the law then imposed on yourself, cannot fail to demonstrate the purity, whilst it increases the lustre of a character which has so many titles to admiration. Such are the sentiments with which we have thought fit to address you; they flow from our hearts, and we verily believe that, among the millions we represent, there is not a virtuous citizen whose heart will disown them.

"All that remains is, that we join in your fervent supplications for the blessing of Heaven on our country; and that we add our own for the choicest of these blessings on the most beloved of her citizens."

After these expressions of enthusiastic admiration on the part of the legislature, it will scarcely be believed that any of the subjects placed under so felicitous a government should indicate a sus-

picion that their liberties and interests were endangered in the hands of General Washington. Such, however, was the case. The same petty jealousy which encroached on his powers as commander-in-chief, now reappeared, carping at the appearance of supremacy, which as a public functionary he was compelled to maintain. The nature of these unworthy suspicions, which were detailed to him in a letter from his friend and kinsman, Dr. Stuart, may best be learned from his reply, which was as follows :—

"While the eyes of America, perhaps, of the world, are turned to this government, and many are watching the movements of all those who are concerned in its administration, I should like to be informed, through so good a medium, of the public opinion of both men and measures, and of none more than myself, not so much of what may be thought commendable parts, if any, of my conduct, as of those which are conceived to be of a different complexion. The man who means to commit no wrong will never be guilty of enormities, consequently can never be unwilling to hear what are ascribed to him as foibles. If they are really such, the knowledge of them in a well-disposed mind will go half-way towards a reform. If they are not errors, he can explain and justify the motives of his actions.

"At a distance from the theatre of action, truth is not always related without embellishment, and sometimes is entirely perverted, from a misconception of the causes which produced the effects that are the subject of censure. This leads me to think that a system, which I found it indispensably necessary to adopt upon my first coming to this

city, might have undergone severe strictures, and have had motives very foreign from those that governed me, assigned as causes thereof; I mean, first, returning no visits; secondly, appointing certain days to receive them generally (not to the exclusion, however, of visits on any other days under particular circumstances); and thirdly, at first entertaining no company, and afterwards (until I was unable to entertain any at all) confining it to official characters. A few days evinced the necessity of the two first in so clear a point of view, that, had I not adopted it, I should have been unable to have attended to any sort of business, unless I had employed the hours allotted to rest and refreshment to this purpose; for, by the time I had done breakfast and thence till dinner, and afterwards till bed-time, I could not get released from the ceremony of one visit before I had to attend to another. In a word, I had no leisure to read or to answer the despatches that were pouring in upon me from all quarters."

In a subsequent letter written to the same gentleman, after his levees had been openly censured by the enemies of his administration, he thus expresses himself:—

"Before the custom was established which now accommodates foreign characters, strangers, and others, who from motives of curiosity, respect to the chief magistrate, or any other cause are induced to call upon me, I was unable to attend to any business whatsoever. For gentlemen consulting their own convenience rather than mine, were calling from the time I rose from breakfast (often before) until I sat down to dinner. This, as I resolved not to neglect my public duties, reduced

me to the choice of one of these alternatives, either to refuse them altogether, or to appoint a time for the reception of them. The first would, I well knew, be disgusting to many. The latter I expected would undergo animadversion from those who would find fault with or without cause. To please every body was impossible; I therefore adopted that line of conduct which combined public advantage with private convenience, and which in my judgment was unexceptionable in itself. These visits are optional; they are made without invitation. Between the hours of three and four every Tuesday, I am prepared to receive them. Gentlemen, often in great numbers, come and go, chat with each other, and act as they please. A porter shows them into the room, and they retire from it when they choose, and without ceremony. At their first entrance they salute me, and I them, and as many as I can talk to, I do. What pomp there is in all this I am unable to discover. Perhaps, it consists in not sitting. To this, two reasons are opposed; first, it is unusual; secondly (which is a more substantial one), because I have no room large enough to contain a third of the chairs which would be sufficient to admit of it. If it is supposed that ostentation, or the fashions of courts (which by the by I believe originate oftener in convenience, not to say necessity, than is generally imagined) gave rise to this custom, I will boldly affirm that no supposition was ever more erroneous; for were I to indulge my inclination, every moment I could withdraw from the fatigues of my station should be spent in retirement. That they are not, proceeds from the sense I entertain of the propriety of giving to every one as free access as consists

with that respect which is due to the chair of government; and that respect, I conceive, is neither to be acquired or preserved but by maintaining a just medium between much state and too great familiarity.

"Similar to the above, but of a more familiar and sociable kind, are the visits every Friday afternoon to Mrs. Washington, where I always am. These public meetings, and a dinner once a week to as many as my table will hold, with the references to and from the different departments of state, and other communication with all parts of the union, is as much, if not more than I am able to undergo; for I have already had, within less than a year, two severe attacks, the last worse than the first; a third it is more than probable will put me to sleep with my fathers; at what distance this may be I know not."

CHAPTER XIV.

Position of the United States on the First Meeting of the New Congress—First Acts of the Legislature—Alterations in the Constitution to meet the Wishes of certain States—Appointment of Officers of State, &c.—The President visits the Eastern States—His Reception—His Address to the Congress at their Second Session—Great Divisions in the Legislature—Illness and Temporary Retirement of the President—General Results of the Operations of the First Congress—Washington's Tour in the Southern States, and his Report thereon.

In accepting the high office to which the unanimous voice of his country had called him, General Washington entered upon a most hazardous and trying undertaking. He found his country embarrassed by ill-defined relations with foreign powers, and internally agitated by serious dissensions arising out of the federal constitution. The novelty of that form of government may account for the difficulty with which its first operations were conducted, while the vehemence of party spirit throughout the union exposed the wisest and most patriotic administration to considerable unpopularity. Moreover, the nation was destitute alike of funds, revenue, and public credit.

Many persons of distinction in the several states had been from the first opposed to the federal constitution. The ratification of it in the respective

houses had passed in several instances by small majorities, and had excited no small animosity in discussion; while in many, amendments had been made for the sake of carrying the main points by annexing objections to its subordinate provisions. Nothing, under these circumstances, could have enabled the administration to act with effect but the unlimited confidence which was placed by the public at large in the abilities and patriotism of those who had presided throughout the revolutionary contest, and who now stood at the helm of government. A decided majority of these were in favour of the constitution as established by the convention.

One of the first acts of the legislature was to establish those departments which were necessary to assist the chief magistrate in the conduct of government, and the following appointments were accordingly made:—

Mr. Jefferson, Secretary of State; Colonel Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury; General Knox, Secretary of War; and Mr. Edmund Randolph, Attorney General. Besides these arrangements, a system of revenue, suited to the emergencies of the occasion, was to be devised and brought into operation; a general system of judicature to be established; and a variety of other national wants to be met, arising out of the new position of the union. Warm and animated debates were also excited by questions respecting the powers of the president, and the titles by which he should be addressed.

In the course of the first session a proposition was brought forward which, as affecting the permanent interests of the nation, was more important

than any which had preceded it. Its object was to recommend to the consideration of the states various additional articles to the constitution. The formidable minorities against many of its existing provisions, and the refusal of two of the states * to complete the union, were indications which, considering the proportion of the people concerned in them, assumed a threatening aspect. The danger arising out of them was fully appreciated by the warmest friends of the constitution; and they were among the most anxious to make such compromises for the sake of general unanimity as were consistent with the integrity and efficiency of the great political principles already in force. A great difficulty, however, lay in the selection from the vast and diversified mass of amendments which had been suggested by separate states; at length, however, a series of additions and alterations to the original instrument was agreed on by two-thirds of both branches of the legislature, and proposed to the adoption of the states. These were accepted and ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states, and thus a vast accession of support was gained by the government.

At the head of the judicial department, the President placed Mr. John Jay, a gentleman whose abilities are sufficiently attested by the masterly addresses and manifestoes of Congress which came from his pen, and some of which have been offered to the reader in the first volume of these Memoirs. The subordinate judicial offices were filled by gentlemen selected with equal discrimination. In appointing to the numerous situations which the

* North Carolina, and Rhode Island.

new form of government rendered it necessary to fill up, General Washington undertook a task of no small delicacy. The applications made to him by candidates were almost innumerable; many of them from men of high consideration, and not a few from those who enjoyed the privilege of his intimate friendship. His reply to an application from one of the latter class, is so characteristic of the nobility of his mind, and affords so impressive an example to all who exercise similar functions, that it well deserves a place in these pages.

"To you, Sir," said he, "and others who know me, I believe it is unnecessary for me to say that when I accepted the important trust committed to my charge, by my country, I gave up every idea of personal gratification that I did not think was compatible with the public good. Under this impression I plainly foresaw that that part of my duty which obliged me to nominate persons to offices, would in many instances be irksome and unpleasing; for, however strong my personal attachment might be to any one, however desirous I might be of giving him a proof of my friendship, and whatever might be his expectations, grounded on the amity which had subsisted between us, I was fully determined to keep myself free from every engagement which could embarrass me in discharging this part of my administration. I have, therefore, uniformly declined giving any decisive answer to the numerous applications that have been made to me, being resolved that whenever I shall be called upon to nominate persons for those offices which may be created, I will do it with a sole view to the public good, and will bring forward those who, upon every consideration, and from the best information I can

obtain, will, in my judgment, be most likely to answer that great end. The delicacy with which your letter was written, and your wishes insinuated, did not require me to be thus explicit on this head with you; but the desire which I have that those persons, whose good opinion I value, should know the principles on which I mean to act in this business, has led me to this full declaration; and, I trust, that the truly worthy and respectable characters in this country will do justice to the motives by which I am actuated in all my public transactions."

The Session of Congress continued until the 29th of September, when they adjourned until the first Monday in January following. Throughout this important session, the most perfect harmony subsisted between the different branches of the legislature. The new political machine had been pushed into motion, and worked with as little friction as could have been expected. The President immediately on his release from his official cares and labours, undertook a tour into the Eastern States, to observe the improvements in the country, and to acquaint himself with the prevailing sentiments and dispositions of the inhabitants. This tour was commenced on the 15th of October, in company with Major Jackson and Mr. Lean, gentlemen of his family. In the course of it, he passed through Connecticut and Massachussetts to Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, whence he returned by a different route to New York.

The results of this visit were in every respect satisfactory. He found the country improving with all the rapidity which could be expected from the

return of peace and the establishment of good government. With many places which he visited the most pleasing associations were connected, owing to their having witnessed his sufferings or his triumphs in the course of the war; while every where he met with that enthusiastic reception which testified the universal gratitude and admiration of his country. Addresses from corporate and learned bodies, military parade, illuminations, triumphal processions and erections, every where welcomed his approach.

The addresses presented to him were particularly grateful to his feelings, from their combining with expressions of affection to himself the assurances of confidence in his government. Of all the multitude which were viewed and answered by the President during this journey, perhaps the most interesting are those which were occasioned by his interview with his brave companions in arms, the Society of Cincinnati of Massachussetts.

"Amidst the various gratulations," said they, "which your arrival in this metropolis has occasioned, permit us, the members of the society of Cincinnati in this commonwealth, most respectfully to assure you of the ardour of esteem and affection you have so indelibly fixed in our hearts as our glorious leader in war, and illustrious example in peace.

"After the solemn and endearing farewell on the banks of the Hudson, which our anxiety presaged as final, most peculiarly pleasing is the present unexpected meeting. On this occasion we cannot avoid the recollection of the various scenes of toil and danger through which you conducted us; and while we contemplate various trying periods of the

war, and the triumphs of peace, we rejoice to behold you, induced by the unanimous voice of your country, entering upon other trials, and other services, alike important, and in some points of view equally hazardous. For the completion of the great purposes which a grateful country has assigned you, long, very long may your invaluable life be preserved. And as the admiring world, while considering you as a soldier, have long wanted a comparison, may your virtues and talents as a statesman leave them without a parallel.

"It is not in words to express an attachment founded like ours. We can only say, that, when soldiers, our greatest pride was a promptitude of obedience to your orders; as citizens, our supreme ambition is to maintain the character of firm supporters of that noble fabric of federal government over which you preside.

"As members of the society of the Cincinnati, it will be our endeavour to cherish those sacred principles of charity and paternal attachment which our institution inculcates. And while our conduct is thus regulated, we can never want the patronage of the first of patriots and the best of men."

To which the President thus replied:

"In reciprocating with gratitude and sincerity the multiplied and affecting gratulations of my fellow-citizens of this commonwealth, they will all of them with justice allow me to say, that none can be dearer to me than the affectionate assurances which you have expressed. Dear indeed is the occasion which restores an intercourse with my faithful associates in prosperous and adverse fortune; and enhanced are the triumphs of peace

participated with those whose virtue and valour so largely contributed to procure them. To that virtue and valour your country has confessed her obligations. Be mine the grateful task to add the testimony of a connexion which it was my pride to own in the field, and is now my happiness to acknowledge in the enjoyments of peace and freedom.

"Regulating your conduct by those principles which have heretofore governed your actions as men, soldiers, and citizens, you will repeat the obligations conferred on your country, and you will transmit to posterity an example that must command their admiration and grateful praise. Long may you continue to enjoy the endearments of paternal attachment, and the heartfelt happiness of reflecting that you have faithfully done your duty.

"While I am permitted to possess the consciousness of this worth, which has long bound me to you by every tie of affection and esteem, I will continue to be your sincere and faithful friend."

On the 8th of January, 1790, the President met the Congress at their second session, a few weeks prior to which time the agreeable intelligence was received that North Carolina had joined the Union. In his opening address, after congratulating Congress on this accession, he proceeded to indicate the measures to which they should give their attention in the following terms:—

"Among the many interesting objects which will engage your attention, that of providing for the common defence will merit your particular regard. To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.

"A free people ought not only to be armed but disciplined; to which end an uniform and well-

digested plan is requisite, and their safety and interest require that they should promote such manufactories as tend to render them independent of others for essential, particularly for military supplies."

After recommending some other measures connected with currency and trade, he added, "Nor am I less persuaded that you will agree with me in opinion, that there is nothing which can better deserve your patronage than the promotion of science and literature. Knowledge is, in every country, the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impression so immediately from the sense of the community, as in ours, it is proportionably essential; to the security of a free constitution it contributes in various ways: by convincing those who are entrusted with the public administration that every valuable end of government is best answered by the enlightened confidence of the people, and by teaching the people themselves to know and to value their own rights; to discern and provide against invasions of them; to distinguish between oppression and the necessary exercise of lawful authority; from burdens proceeding from a disregard to their convenience and those resulting from the inevitable exigencies of society; to discriminate the spirit of liberty from that of licentiousness; cherishing the first, avoiding the last, and uniting a speedy but temperate vigilance against encroachments, with an inviolable respect to the laws.

"Whether this desirable object will be best promoted by affording aid to seminaries of learning, already established, by the institution of a national university, or by any other expedients, will be

well worthy a place in the deliberations of the legislature.

"I saw with peculiar pleasure at the close of the last session, the resolution entered into by you expressive of your opinion, that an adequate provision for the support of the public credit is a matter of high importance to the national honour and prosperity. In this sentiment I entirely concur, and to devise such a provision as will be truly consistent with the end, I add an equal reliance on the cheerful co-operation of the other branch of the legislature. It would be superfluous to specify inducements to a measure in which the character and permanent interests of the United States are so obviously and deeply concerned, and which has received so explicit a sanction from your declaration."

To this address the Senate and the House of Representatives returned an answer in perfect harmony with its sentiments. In the course of the session, however, some subjects were brought before the legislature, which occasioned a collision that kindled the latent sparks of party animosity into a flame, which was never entirely extinguished. Some important arrangements of a financial kind, were reported by the Secretary of the Treasury, for the support, or rather the establishment, of public credit, which met with vehement opposition. To these arrangements the President gave his cordial assent; and although the purity of his motives was universally allowed, and the integrity of his patriotism stood far above suspicion, yet as the opinion of the acts of public men is too generally transferred to their personal character, Washington could hardly expect to retain his popularity unimpaired.

During this important session, the incessant application of the President to business, and the solicitude occasioned by the vital importance of the questions to which he applied his mind, produced very sensible effects upon his constitution. A severe attack of illness was the consequence, by which his life was placed in the most imminent danger. For his restoration, exercise, and an entire remission of the cares of public business, were deemed essential; and he accordingly availed himself of the recess to revisit the tranquil and endeared scenes of Mount Vernon. After a tour to Rhode Island, which in his former journey he had not visited, as that state then formed no part of the Union, he retired again for a short interval to indulge in his favourite propensities.

This retirement was of essential service in the re-establishment of his health, and at the close of the autumn (1790) he again repaired to Philadelphia, to which place the Congress had adjourned, to meet the legislature. One of the most momentous acts of this session was the incorporation of a national bank. This measure produced the utmost difference of opinion, not only in the legislature, but also in the cabinet. In the former body, long and animated debates arose as to whether such a proceeding was consistent with the principles of the constitution: nor was there less difference of opinion in the cabinet. Messrs. Jefferson and Randolph were convinced that it was unconstitutional, while Messrs. Hamilton and Knox advocated the opposite opinion. After much deliberation, the President was convinced that the measure was perfectly constitutional, and accordingly ratified it with his signature.

Much hostility was excited by this proceeding, but it was chiefly directed against the two ministers who had advised it, while the entire and long-tried character of the President was secure from suspicion.

With the 3rd of March, 1791, terminated the existence of the first Congress elected under the constitution of the United States. Its operations had occasioned some vast changes in the political condition of the nation *. The party denominated federal having prevailed at the election, a majority of the members were stedfast friends of the constitution, and were sincerely desirous of supporting a system which they had introduced, and on the preservation of which in full health and vigour they firmly believed the happiness of their fellow-citizens, and the respectability of the nation greatly depended. To organise a government, to retrieve the national character, to establish a system of revenue, and to create public credit, were amongst the exalted and arduous duties which were imposed upon them by the political situation of their country. With persevering labour, guided by no inconsiderable portion of virtue and intelligence, these objects were in a great degree accomplished. Out of the measures proposed for their attainment questions alike interesting and intricate unavoidably arose. It is not in the nature of man to discuss such questions without great agitation of the passions, and the excitement of irritation which does not readily subside. Had it even been the happy and singular lot of America to see its national legislature assemble uninfluenced by those prejudices which grew out of the previous divisions of the

* Judge Marshall.

country, yet the many delicate points which they were called upon to decide could not have failed to disturb this enviable state of harmony, and to mingle some share of party spirit with their deliberations. But when the actual state of the public mind was contemplated, and due weight given to the important consideration, that at no very distant day a successor to the present chief magistrate must be elected, it was still less to be hoped that the first Congress could pass away without producing strong and permanent dispositions in parties to impute to each other designs unfriendly to the public happiness. As yet, however, these imputations did not reach the President. By all, his character was held sacred, and the purity of his motives admitted, nor did his influence appear to be impaired. Some divisions were understood to have found their way into the cabinet. It was intimated that between the secretary of state and the gentleman who was at the head of the treasury very serious differences had arisen, but those high officers were believed to be equally attached to the President, who was not suspected of undue partiality to either of them. If his assent to the bill for incorporating the national bank produced discontent, the opponents of that measure seemed disposed to ascribe his conduct to his judgment rather than to any prepossession in favour of the party by whom it was carried. The opposition, therefore, in Congress to the measures of the government seemed to be levelled at the secretary of the treasury and at the northern members, by whom those measures were generally supported, not at the President, by whom they were approved. By taking this direction, it made its way into the

public mind without being encountered by that devoted affection which a great majority of the people felt for the chief magistrate of the union. In the mean time, the national prosperity was in a state of rapid progression, and the government was gaining, though slowly, in the public opinion. But in several of the state assemblies, especially in the southern division of the continent, serious evidences of dissatisfaction were exhibited, which demonstrated the jealousy with which the local sovereignties contemplated the powers exercised by the federal legislature.

Upon the close of the session, President Washington appointed an executive council to manage the business of government in his absence, and commenced a journey to the southern states. On his way he stopped at the Potomac, and there, in accordance with the resolutions of Congress, marked out the site of a city designed for the future seat of government. It was in the southern states that the strongest feeling of disaffection existed, and the warm and respectful reception with which the chief magistrate was welcomed, must be regarded as a striking indication of the rooted esteem in which his character was universally held. The impressions left on his mind by the journey may be learned from the following passage from one of his letters :—

"In my late tour through the southern states, I experienced great satisfaction in seeing the good effects of the general government in that part of the union. The people at large have felt the security which it gives, and the equal justice which it administers to them. The farmer, the merchant, and the mechanic, have seen their several interests

attended to, and from thence they unite in placing a confidence in their representatives, as well as in those in whose hands the execution of the laws is placed. Industry has there taken place of idleness, and economy of dissipation. Two or three years of good crops, and a ready market for the produce of their lands, have put every one in good humour; and, in some instances, they even impute to the government what is due only to the goodness of Providence.

"The establishment of public credit is an immense point gained in our national concerns. This I believe exceeds the expectation of the most sanguine among us; and a late instance, unparalleled in this country, has been given of the confidence reposed in our measures, by the rapidity with which the subscriptions to the bank of the United States were filled. In two hours after the books were opened by the commissioners the whole number of shares were taken up, and four thousand more applied for, than were allowed by the institution. This circumstance was not only pleasing as it related to the confidence in government, but also as it exhibited an unexpected proof of the resources of our citizens."

During the next session a great national question presented itself to the legislature, upon which it ultimately fell to the President to decide. It was one of the provisions of the constitution that there should not be more than one representative to thirty thousand inhabitants. An enumeration having been made, the house of representatives passed a bill, providing for each state to send one representative for that number of its population.

This ratio, in several instances, leaving a large fraction, operated hardly on the small states. The senate, to remedy this evil, assumed a new system of apportionment. They ascertained the whole population of the United States, and dividing this number by thirty thousand, took the result as the number of representatives, and then apportioned this number upon the several states according to their population, in which the house concurred.

When the bill was presented for the signature of the President, he took the opinions of his cabinet upon the constitutionality of the arrangement. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Randolph thought the measure unconstitutional; General Knox was undecided, and Colonel Hamilton conceived that the expression of the constitution might be applied to the United States, or to the several states, and thought it best to concide with the construction of the legislature. Upon mature deliberation, the President considered the bill unconstitutional, and, therefore, without hesitation, returned it with the following objections:—

"Gentlemen of the House of Representatives,

"I have maturely considered the act, passed by the two Houses, entitled 'An act for the apportionment of representatives among the several states according to the first enumeration,' and I return it to your House, wherein it originated, with the following objections:—

"First, The constitution has prescribed that representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, and there is no proportion or division which,

applied to the respective numbers of the states, will yield the number and allotment of representatives proposed by the bill.

"Secondly, The constitution has also provided, that the number of representatives shall not exceed one for thirty thousand; which restriction is, by fair and obvious construction, to be applied to the separate and respective numbers of the states, and the bill has allotted to eight of the states more than one for thirty thousand."

In a new bill, a representative for every thirty-three thousand to each state was substituted.

CHAPTER XV.

Efforts of the President to heal the Dissensions in his Cabinet —Increase of democratic Spirit in the Congress—Favoured by the French Revolution—Declaration of War between Great Britain and France — Washington proclaims the Neutrality of America—Conduct of the French Minister—Formation of democratic Clubs —Removal of Genet—Washington's Address to Congress, and their Reply.

THE vehement discussion of momentous points during the last session of Congress had not only inspired a high degree of party spirit, mingled with some personal animosity, in the two departments of the legislature, but had also, as we have seen, produced somewhat similar results in the cabinet. There were many cardinal points of character, in which Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Hamilton were very dissimilarly constituted. In their political opinions they were at perpetual variance, and at length they settled down into implacable personal enmity.

It is easy to perceive how hostile this circumstance was both to the public interests and to the efficiency of President Washington's administration. He observed it with grief and mortification, and endeavoured by free communication with Jefferson, in whose esteem and admiration he stood unrivalled, to remedy the evil. In a letter addressed to them in August, 1792, he says—

"How unfortunate, how much to be regretted then, that while we are encompassed on all sides with avowed enemies and insidious friends, internal

dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals. The last, to me, is the most serious, the most alarming, and the most afflicting of the two; and without more charity for the opinions of one another in government matters, or some more infallible criterion by which the truth of speculative opinions, before they have undergone the test of experience, are to be forejudged than has yet fallen to the lot of fallibility, I believe it will be difficult if not impracticable to manage the reins of government, or keep the parts of it together; for if, instead of laying our shoulders to the machine, after measures are decided on, one pulls this way, and another that, before the utility of the thing is fairly tried, it must inevitably be torn asunder; and in my opinion, the fairest prospect of happiness and prosperity that ever was presented to man, will be lost, perhaps for ever.

"My earnest wish and fondest hope therefore is, that instead of wounding suspicions, and irritating charges, there may be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances, and temporising yielding on all sides. Under the exercise of these, matters will go on smoothly, and, if possible, more prosperously. Without them, every thing must rub; the wheels of government will clog; our enemies will triumph; and, by throwing their weight into the disaffected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabric we have been erecting.

"I do not mean to apply this advice, or these observations, to any particular person or character. I have given them in the same general terms to other officers of the government, because the disagreements which have arisen from difference of opinions, and the attacks which have been made

upon almost all the measures of government, and most of its executive officers, have for a long time past filled me with painful sensations, and cannot fail, I think, of producing unhappy consequences, at home and abroad."

To a letter of Mr. Jefferson's, in which he endeavoured to prove, that although he wished to amend, yet he had advocated the adoption of the federal constitution, the President thus replied :—

" I did not require the evidence of the extracts which you enclosed me, to convince me of your attachment to the constitution of the United States, or of your disposition to promote the general welfare of this country; but I regret, deeply regret, the difference of opinion which has arisen, and divided you and another principal officer of the government; and wish devoutly there could be an accommodation of them by mutual yieldings.

" A measure of this sort would produce harmony and consequent good in our public councils; and the contrary will inevitably produce confusion and serious mischiefs; and for what? Because mankind cannot see alike, but would adopt different means to obtain the same end. For I will frankly and solemnly declare, that I believe the views of both to be pure and well meant, and that experience only will decide with respect to the salubrity of the measures which are the subject of this dispute. Why, then, when some of the best citizens of the United States, men of discernment, uniform and tried patriots, who have no sinister views to promote, but are chaste in their ways of thinking and acting, are to be found, some on one side, and some on the other of the questions which have caused these agitations; why should either of

you be so tenacious of your opinions as to make no allowance for those of the other?

"I could, and indeed was about to add more on this interesting subject, but will forbear, at least for the present, after expressing a wish that the cup which has been presented to us may not be snatched from our lips, by a discordance of action, when I am persuaded that there is no discordance in your views. I have a great and sincere esteem for you both; and ardently wish that some line could be marked out, by which both of you could walk."

To the other party in this unhappy dissension, Mr. Hamilton, he wrote as follows:—

"Differences in political opinion are as unavoidable as to a certain point they may be necessary; but it is exceedingly to be regretted that subjects cannot be discussed with temper on the one hand, or decisions submitted to on the other, without improperly implicating the motives which led to them: and this regret borders upon chagrin when we find that men of abilities, zealous patriots, having the same general objects in view, and the same upright intentions to prosecute them, will not exercise more charity in deciding on the opinions and actions of each other. When matters get to such lengths, the natural inference is, that both sides have strained the cords beyond their bearing; that a middle course would be found the best until experience shall have decided on the right way, or, which is not to be expected, because it is denied to mortals, till there shall be some infallible rule by which to forejudge events."

These excellent measures failed of their effect, and the two ministers remained in a relation to each other which occasioned much embarrassment

and mischief in various departments of government. The attorney-general almost invariably concurred with Mr. Jefferson, while the secretary at war usually supported Hamilton's views. In this state of things, nothing could have prevented the dissolution of the government but the singular tact and wisdom of the President, which, like all the other active and passive virtues of his character, seemed by some mysterious but invariable law to expand in proportion to the difficulties which called them into exercise. In all his councils, agitated as they were by party feeling, he gleaned from both parties information, suggestions and admonitions, but, meanwhile, kept his own views locked up in impenetrable reserve, nor ever discovered them until the moment when it was imperatively necessary to make the disclosure. Hence it may be justly said of him that in deliberating upon national subjects submitted to him as the supreme executive, he seems to have occupied a station above the influence of human passion and prejudice, to have sternly repudiated every consideration of a personal and local kind, and, having accurately estimated the value of every separate part and argument, to have decided from the dictates of pure intelligence.

The 3rd of March, 1793, put a period to the constitutional existence of the present Congress. At its separation, it possessed a character more analogous to that of the British parliament than to what might have been anticipated in a nation which had recently arrived at a state of political independence, and placed under all the advantages of a benign and equal government. Two distinct parties had been organised, which assumed the form of a ministerial and an opposition party,

and the numbers constituting them were nicely balanced. A vehement party spirit pervaded both, and though the president had as yet been sheltered from the effects of their conflicts by the integrity of his character, yet it was quite manifest that he would sooner or later be involved in the dispute.

President Washington was wise enough to perceive that although great sacrifices had been made by his countrymen for liberty, yet that even then, there was the tendency to advance from that salutary condition to a state of licentiousness. He knew that there was not philosophy enough among his countrymen to make the nice distinction between the equality of individuals and the inequality of offices and functions, and stern republican as he was, he was fully sensible of the necessity of those observances which were necessitated by the character of his office. Against these observances there was a strong prejudice in the minds of the more democratic party in the legislature and the country, and the way in which this prejudice was manifested, strikingly proves that when political rights have long been withheld, the people are very incompetent to exercise them with justice and moderation. A striking instance of this had occurred on the 22nd of February preceding their separation. It was the birth-day of President Washington, and a motion was made to adjourn for half an hour. It was perfectly understood that this motion was made to give the members an opportunity of waiting on the chief magistrate to make the compliments adapted to the occasion. This was seriously opposed, and the House divided upon the question. The adjournment was carried by forty-one to eighteen. The day was celebrated by several

companies, and some toasts were published, manifesting the deep sense which was entertained of the exalted services of this illustrious citizen. These circumstances gave great umbrage to some of those who could perceive monarchical tendencies in every act of respect, and the offenders were rebuked in the National Gazette for setting up an idol who might become dangerous to liberty, and for the injustice of neglecting all his compatriots of the revolution, and ascribing to him the praise which was due to others.

Such sentiments as these were greatly strengthened by events in Europe. The French revolution, which, as was justly remarked, has been the admiration, the wonder, and the terror of the civilised world, had from its commencement been viewed with the deepest interest. At first, general hopes were entertained that it would result in the advancement of liberty, and of the happiness of mankind; but it soon became apparent that it was conducted on principles from which happiness could never result. Still, however, a large proportion of the American people rejoiced in every success of the revolutionists, while only a few were wise enough to foresee the results in which it has actually issued. This prevalent and very natural sentiment is well accounted for by Judge Marshall.

"There seems," says he, "to be something infectious in the example of a powerful and enlightened nation verging towards democracy, which imposes on the human mind, and leads human reason in fetters. Novelties introduced by such a nation are stripped of the objections which had been preconceived against them, and opinions which seemed the best settled yield to the overwhelming

weight of such dazzling authority. It presents the semblance of being the sense of mankind breaking loose from the shackles which had been imposed by artifice, and asserting the freedom and dignity of his nature."

With these sentiments the major proportion of American society were tinctured; while those who shrunk from the barbarous horrors by which every step of it was signalised were proscribed as hostile to the cause of liberty. Nor was it only as spectators that the American people were interested in these singular events. Their national vanity was flattered by the thought that they—a nation of yesterday—had exerted such a powerful influence over one of the most ancient, powerful, and civilised states of Europe. They cherished with pride the feeling that the torch of liberty, as they considered it, had been lighted in France from their altars; or, to use the quaint and characteristic language of Dr. Franklin, that "the French, having served an apprenticeship in America, had set up for themselves in Europe."

Moreover, in common with almost every other civilised nation, they had caught the infection of the principles on which the French revolution was conducted, and it became increasingly evident that to the prevalent democratic sentiments even the constitution of the senate was obnoxious.

In the midst of this turbulent feeling the term of General Washington's Presidency expired. The toils of political life, and the certainty of his becoming involved, sooner or later, in the party animosities by which his country was disturbed, had long been increasingly distasteful to him, and he accordingly wrote a valedictory address to the

people, declaring his resolution to retire for ever from public affairs. The critical state of the country, and the earnest solicitations of all, determined him once more to sacrifice his personal ease to his patriotism, and he a second time accepted the office of President, which was awarded to him by unanimous suffrage. Mr. Adams was again elected Vice-President.

General Washington clearly perceived that the predominant feeling of the country was such as rendered it very probable that measures might be adopted which would involve a renewal of the miseries of war; and his anxieties were increased when, in the commencement of April, 1793, while transacting some important private business at Mount Vernon, intelligence was brought him of the declaration of war between Great Britain and France. Impressed with the momentous character of the crisis, he hastened to the seat of government, and on the following day addressed a letter to the members of his cabinet, proposing to their immediate consideration a series of questions respecting the line of policy which it became the legislature to adopt.

The result of a cabinet council was the issuing of a proclamation of neutrality, forbidding the citizens of the United States to engage in any acts of hostility against either of the belligerent powers, or to afford to either, articles rendered contraband in time of war by international usage or law. It was also resolved to receive a minister from the French republic; while on subordinate points the cabinet was, as usual, divided. After a full deliberation upon the points at issue between his councillors, the President resolved upon those arrangements

of neutrality upon which his European policy was based during the remainder of his administration, and the results of which were to secure to America the blessings of peace, while the greater part of the old world was convulsed with war.

On the 8th of April, 1793, M. Genet arrived at Charleston, South Carolina, as the minister of republican France. His reception was enthusiastic, and the utmost attentions were paid to him throughout his journey to Philadelphia, where he delivered his credentials. While in Charleston, Genet, with that intemperance of feeling and contempt of national rights which generally distinguishes new converts to the doctrines of liberty and equality, authorised the arming of ships and fitted out privateers to cruise against the British West Indian trade. The President readily perceived that such a course was inconsistent with the professed neutrality of the United States, and by the advice of his council he ordered reparation to be made to the British; and further, that the vessels thus illegally equipped should leave the ports of America. These resolutions Genet testified a determination not to observe. Shortly afterwards, two American citizens engaged in the illicit employment of the French minister were seized and imprisoned by the civil magistrates; upon which M. Genet demanded their release in the most imperious and offensive terms.

It was now that the moderation and moral courage of President Washington were again put to the test, and rendered subservient to the preservation of the public peace. Without the use of one intemperate expression, the reprobation of the government was expressed against his conduct;

and the executive, heedless of his violence, pursued an undeviating course. The conduct of Genet manifestly proceeded from a conviction that he might appeal successfully from the government to the people of the United States; and there was, unquestionably, much to favour such a notion. At the festivals of the country, and on all public occasions, the close sympathy of the people with France was indicated by the union of the national symbols, by the most democratic toasts, and by illuminations and public rejoicings to commemorate the successes of the revolutionists against the government; while under the guise of advocating the principles of "measures, not men," the most unequivocal reflections were cast upon the influence of the President. Clubs were formed throughout the Union, on the model of the Jacobin clubs of Paris. These were cemented by correspondence, and their power greatly enhanced by harmonious co-operation.

These clubs made it their chief object to defame the measures and the motives of the executive, and to excite the people to an universal sympathy with France against Great Britain. The declaration of neutrality was stigmatised as equivalent to a royal edict, and as exceeding the limits of the powers of the chief magistrate. The press was employed with remarkable vigour for the propagation of opinions favourable to a war with Great Britain. The events of the revolutionary struggle were delineated in the strongest light before the eyes of the people, and the public papers teemed with spirited appeals, whether "a line of conduct entirely impartial should be pursued between both the belligerent powers? Whether the services of the one

and the injuries of the other should be forgotten? Whether a friend and an enemy should be treated with equal favour, and neither gratitude nor resentment constitute a feature of the American character? Whether the people of America were alike friendly to republicanism and monarchy, to liberty and despotism?" The cause of America, and that of France, were represented as inseparably linked together, and every passion of the people was sought to be inflamed to a degree of insubordination and hostility to their government.

Fortunately for the peace of the United States, Washington not only retained the indomitable courage with which he had maintained the cause of freedom in the field, but also possessed the wisdom to oppose every species of tyranny, whether it appeared in the caprices of a despot, or arose out of the anarchy of a people. He withstood with equal majesty the "civium ardor" and the "vultus tyranni;" and, amidst the agitation and the growing disaffection of the nation, he pursued with undeviating firmness the only course which could perpetuate to his country the combined blessings of peace and civil order.

It cannot be doubted that this line of conduct on the part of the President, exposed him to many groundless suspicions and to much personal animosity. Whilst his views terminated on the preservation of peace by a strict neutrality, the party which dignified itself with the name of "the people," conceived that his conduct indicated a settled hostility to the cause of liberty, and even a desire, by provoking France to engage America in the general war, for the extirpation of republican principles. These monstrous calumnies were daily

trumpeted forth by a licentious press, and the degree in which they were entertained among the people, presents one of the most humiliating examples afforded by universal history, of the ineffable littleness, meanness, and mutability of the human mind; and will, probably, remind the reader of the impassioned exclamation of grief and shame which once burst from the heart of Washington—"What, Gracious God! is man!"

Still the correspondence of the President at this period indicated but little sensibility to the slanders which were daily heaped upon him. From one of his letters, however, his sentiments on the occasion may be very clearly perceived. In writing to General Lee, then governor of Virginia, he says,—

"That there are in this, as in all other countries, discontented characters, I well know; as also that these characters are actuated by very different views; some good, from an opinion that the measures of the general government are impure; some bad, and (if I may be allowed to use so harsh an expression) diabolical, inasmuch as they are not only meant to impede the measures of that government, generally, but more especially to destroy the confidence, which it is necessary the people should place (until they have an unequivocal proof of demerit) in their public servants; for in this light I consider myself whilst I am an occupant of office; and if they were to go further and call me their slave, during this period, I would not dispute the point with them. But in what will this abuse terminate? For the result, as it concerns myself, I care not; I have a consolation within, of which no earthly effort can deprive me; and that is, that neither ambition nor interested motives have influenced my conduct.

The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and pointed, can never reach my most valuable part; though whilst I am up as a mark, they will be continually aimed at me. The publications in Freeman's and Bache's papers, are outrages on common decency, and they progress in that style in proportion as their pieces are treated with contempt, and passed over in silence by those against whom they are directed. Their tendency, however, is too obvious to be mistaken by men of cool and dispassionate minds; and, in my opinion, ought to alarm them, because it is difficult to prescribe bounds to their effects."

At length the conduct of Genet outraged the patience and forbearance of General Washington, and he determined that efficient measures should be taken for his punishment. He had had the audacity to declare, that he would appeal from the President to the people of America. He had equipped and armed a privateer to cruise for the capture of British vessels, from the port of Philadelphia, and treated with the utmost insult the ministers who had remonstrated against its setting sail. In 1794, he deliberately planned two expeditions against Spain, to be carried on from the United States. Every arrangement was made, when the President interposed, and with the full concurrence of his councillors, ordered the marshal to take the French minister into custody. On the evening, however, preceding the very day on which these orders were to be executed, intelligence of his recal reached the President.

On the 4th of December, 1793, Washington met the Congress, and in his opening address, thus

alluded to his re-election to the presidency, and the political position of the United States :—

"Since the commencement of the term for which I have been again called into office, no fit occasion has arisen for expressing to my fellow-citizens at large, the deep and respectful sense which I feel of the renewed testimony of public approbation. While, on the one hand, it awakened my gratitude for all those instances of affectionate partiality with which I have been honoured by my country; on the other, it could not prevent an earnest wish for that retirement, from which no private consideration should ever have torn me. But, influenced by the belief that my conduct would be estimated according to its real motives, and that the people, and the authorities derived from them, would support exertions, having nothing personal for their object, I have obeyed the suffrage which commanded me to resume the executive power; and I humbly implore that Being on whose will the fate of nations depends, to crown with success our mutual endeavours for the general happiness." He then made the following communications respecting the measures of the administration.

"As soon as the war in Europe had embraced those powers with whom the United States have the most extensive relations, there was reason to apprehend that our intercourse with them might be interrupted, and our disposition for peace drawn in question, by suspicions too often entertained by belligerent nations. It seemed, therefore, to be my duty to admonish our citizens of the consequence of a contraband trade, and of hostile acts to any of the parties, and to obtain by a declaration of the

existing state of things, an easier admission of our rights to the immunities belonging to our situation. Under these impressions the proclamation was issued.

"In this posture of affairs, both new and delicate, I resolved to adopt general rules, which should conform to the treaties, and assert the privileges of the United States. These were reduced into a system, which shall be communicated to you."

After noticing those legislative provisions which his experience dictated as necessary, he proceeded:

"I cannot recommend to your notice measures for the fulfilment of *our* duties to the rest of the world, without again pressing upon you the necessity of placing yourselves in a situation of complete defence, and of exacting from *them* the fulfilment of their duties towards us. The United States ought not to indulge a persuasion, that, contrary to the order of human events, they will for ever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms with which the history of every other nation abounds. There is a rank due to the United States among nations which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war."

After advising the greatest appropriations for the redemption of the public debt which the resources of the country would permit, he in the following manner concluded the address:—

"The several subjects to which I have now referred, open a wide range to your deliberations, and involve some of the choicest interests of our

common country. Permit me to bring to your remembrance the magnitude of your task. Without an unprejudiced coolness, the welfare of the government may be hazarded; without harmony, as far as consists with freedom of sentiment, its dignity may be lost. But as the legislative proceedings of the United States will never, I trust, be reproached for the want of temper or of candour, so shall not the public happiness languish from the want of my strenuous and warmest co-operations."

CHAPTER XVI.

Reply to the President's Speech—Threatening Aspect of Great Britain and the United States—Embassy to London—Insurrection in Pennsylvania—The President's Views of its Causes—Mr. Jay's Mission results in the Conclusion of a Treaty with Great Britain—It is ratified by the American Legislature—Violent Opposition to the British Treaty—Washington's Remarks thereon—Calumnies against the President—Proceedings resulting from a Change of Ministers—Notice of the general Prosperity of the Country in the President's Speech—Hostile Measures of the House of Representatives on the Ratification of the British Treaty—Consequent Conduct of the President.

THE answer of the senate and House of Representatives indicated no evidence that the malignant spirit which had infused itself into the popular mind had yet infected the majority of the legislature. It made it evident that its members still venerated and loved their founder and president, whatever differences of opinion might prevail respecting the measures of his government.

"It was," they said, "with equal sincerity and promptitude they embraced the occasion for expressing to him their congratulations on so distinguished a testimony of public approbation, and their entire confidence in the purity and patriotism of the motives which had produced this obedience to the voice of his country. It is," proceeded the address,

" to virtues which have commanded long and universal reverence and services, from which have flowed great and lasting benefits, that the tribute of praise may be paid without the reproach of flattery; and it is from the same sources that the fairest anticipations may be derived in favour of public happiness."

At the close of the year 1793, Mr. Jefferson resigned his secretaryship, and was succeeded by Mr. E. Randolph. Immediately prior to his appointment, the British government had given instructions to her ships to seize all vessels carrying provisions to any colony of France, and bring them into English ports. This aggressive conduct roused the government of the United States; a bill passed the Congress for certain warlike preparations, and the commencement of the American navy was made by the building of a few frigates. While, however, these measures were in progress, a letter was received by President Washington from the minister at the British court, announcing that the obnoxious order was revoked, and that Lord Grenville, in a conversation with the representative of America, had expressed sentiments favourable to a settled peace with his government.

This communication operated an entire change in the views of the federal members of Congress; while the more democratic part of the community redoubled their efforts to excite their countrymen to hostility against Great Britain. Washington clearly foresaw the irreparable mischief which would inevitably ensue from the engagement of his country in war with Great Britain, and her throwing herself into the arms of any nation in the state in which France then was. America was now

enjoying the benefits of British commerce, and so little of public principle was found in those who directed the policy of France (if, indeed, France may be said to have been directed, in this time of unparalleled anarchy and convulsion) that he dreaded the recurrence of that political subordination which would so probably ensue from the connection of the United States with such a power.

In this crisis, which was rendered peculiarly alarming by the intense excitement which pervaded the public mind, the President resolved upon one of those measures which indicated his peculiar fitness to guide the affairs of an infant republic. This resolution was conveyed to the senate in the following terms :—

"The communications which I have made to you during your present session, from the despatches of our minister in London, contain a serious aspect of our affairs with Great Britain. But as peace ought to be pursued with unremitted zeal, before the last resource, which has so often been the scourge of nations, and cannot fail to check the advancing prosperity of the United States, is contemplated, I have thought proper to nominate John Jay as Envoy Extraordinary of the United States to his Britannic Majesty.

"My confidence in our minister plenipotentiary in London continues undiminished. But a mission like this, while it corresponds with the solemnity of the occasion, will announce to the world a solicitude for the friendly adjustment of our complaints, and a reluctance to hostility. Going immediately from the United States, such an envoy will carry with him a full knowledge of the existing temper and sensibility of our country ; and will thus be

taught to vindicate our rights with firmness, and to cultivate peace with sincerity."

This embassy was approved by the Congress by a majority of ten voices only; while to a large proportion of American people as well as to almost half the legislature it was regarded with suspicion and censure.

During this year, domestic events transpired which obliged the President to act with a degree of promptitude and energy which rendered him increasingly obnoxious to a considerable portion of the American people. Under the last presidency an act had passed the legislature, imposing a duty on spirits distilled within the United States. This act had excited great displeasure in the state of Pennsylvania, which from the first settlement of the constitution had been vehemently opposed to the federal system. At, length, this aversion broke out into overt acts of insubordination, and a considerable party refused compliance with the law. Local acts were passed by the provincial legislature, and the entire measure was modified by Congress without effect. A daring combination was organised to frustrate the enforcement of the law. A proclamation from the President was equally ineffectual, and the subject came before the cabinet, into which the governor of Pennsylvania was called for the occasion. The majority of the cabinet advised the President to adopt those powers for the suppression of the disorder with which he was invested by the constitution. He accordingly issued the proclamation which the law prescribed, prior to the employment of military force; and even after this preliminary measure, he nominated commissioners to proceed to the disturbed districts,

offering a general amnesty to all who would return to their allegiance to government. The insurgents, however, were stimulated by a portion of the public press, and imagined that the majority of their fellow-countrymen were favourable to their illegal designs.

At length, a large militia force was ordered from Pennsylvania and the neighbouring states, and the insurrection was suppressed. This combination is deserving attention as indicating the state of feeling in the United States, which had been in a great measure produced by the democratic societies which had now become exceedingly numerous, and whose sole object seemed to be to scatter far and wide the elements of disaffection and anarchy. To the influence of these mischievous combinations General Washington confidently attributes it. In a letter to Mr. Jay he remarked :—

"That the self-created societies, who have spread themselves over this country, have been labouring incessantly to sow the seeds of distrust, jealousy, and of course discontent, hoping thereby to effect some revolution in the government, is not unknown to you. That they have been the fomenters of the western disturbances, admits of no doubt in the mind of any one who will examine their conduct. But, fortunately, they have precipitated a crisis for which they were not prepared, and thereby have unfolded views which will, I trust, effect their annihilation sooner than it might have happened."

General Washington had the firmness and independence to denounce these societies to the national legislature, and to lend his personal influence to counteract their designs, thereby bringing upon himself their resentment.

In his official address to Congress, on the 19th of November, he, as a channel of public information, narrated the rise, progress, and issue of the insurrection, passed a merited encomium on the patriotism of those who had with alacrity exerted themselves to suppress it, and proceeded to observe :—

"To every description of citizens let praise be given. But let them persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that precious depository of American happiness, the Constitution of the United States. And when in the calm moments of reflection, they shall have retraced the origin and progress of the insurrection, let them determine whether it has not been fomented by combinations of men, who, careless of consequences, and disregarding the unerring truth, that those who rouse cannot always appease a civil convulsion, have disseminated, from an ignorance or perversion of facts, suspicions, jealousies, and accusations of the whole government." He, on this occasion, again recommended to the legislature the organisation of the militia, and made such other communications as the state of the country rendered expedient.

In their answer to this address, the Senate said, "Our anxiety arising from the licentious and open resistance to the laws in the western counties of Pennsylvania, has been increased by the proceedings of certain self-created societies relative to the laws and administrations of the government; proceedings, in our apprehensions, founded in political error, calculated, if not intended, to disorganise our government, and which, by inspiring delusive hopes of support, have been instrumental in misleading our fellow-citizens in the scene of insurrection."

They expressed an unqualified approbation of the measures adopted by the Executive to suppress the insurrection, and concluded in the following manner. "At a period so momentous in the affairs of nations, the temperate, just and firm policy that you have pursued in respect to foreign powers, has been eminently calculated to promote the great and essential interest of our country, and has created the fairest title to the public gratitude and thanks."

It should be noticed that the reply from the House of Representatives was not equally cordial. They omitted all notice of the policy of government towards foreign powers, and made no reply to his remarks on self-constituted societies.

On the 31st of January, 1795, Mr. Hamilton resigned his place as Secretary of the Treasury, and was succeeded by Mr. Oliver Wolcott. And soon after, General Knox resigned the secretaryship of war, and was succeeded by Colonel T. Pickering.

While these events were taking place in America, Judge Jay was executing a commission in England highly important to his country.

From the moment that he was admitted to a conference with the British cabinet, he with the ardour of a patriot, and the ability of a statesman, devoted himself to the business of his mission. While decorous in his behaviour towards the British crown, he maintained the respectability of his own character, and supported the honour of the United States. Persuaded that war would be the consequence of a failure of his negociation, he patiently attended to the investigation of the subject in controversy, and finally agreed with Lord

Grenville upon a treaty between the two countries. In a letter to the President, he declared this to be the best it was possible to obtain, and added, "I ought not to conceal from you, that the confidence reposed in your personal character was visible and useful throughout the negociation."

On the 8th of June, the President submitted the treaty, with the documents which attended it, to the deliberation of the Senate, that they might "in their wisdom decide whether they would advise and consent that it should be ratified."

After deliberate investigation, the Senate, by exactly two-thirds of their number, the constitutional majority, advised its ratification, with some qualification of one of its articles.

During the absence of Mr. Jay, the utmost endeavours of the democratic party were exerted to prejudice the minds of the American people against the objects of his mission, and the ratification of the treaty; and while the President was absent at Mount Vernon, one senator so far forgot what was due to his situation, as to communicate a spurious copy of the treaty to the editor of one of the anti-federal newspapers. The result of this disgraceful conduct was a tumultuous opposition to the proposed measure from all quarters of the country. Public meetings were generally held to oppose its adoption, and, after one which was held at Philadelphia, copies of the treaty were burnt by the multitude before the doors of the British ministers. Meanwhile, the press teemed with pamphlets, calculated to increase the popular aversion to Great Britain, and to all pacific measures.

The President was deeply conscious of the evils to be dreaded from this condition of the public mind.

He perceived that in such a state of popular feeling, America was liable to be made the tool of France, and to catch the contagion of that reckless insubordination which was bringing anarchy upon that misguided people, and deluging Europe with blood. In a letter to the secretary of state, dated July 29th, he thus expressed his sentiments on the subject:—

"I have never since I have been in the administration of the government, seen a crisis which, in my opinion, has been so pregnant with interesting events, nor one from which more is to be apprehended, whether viewed on the one side or the other. From New York there is, and I am told will further be, a counter current; but how formidable it may appear, I know not. If the same does not take place at Boston and other towns, it will afford but too strong evidence that the opposition is in a manner universal, and would make the ratification a very serious business indeed. But as it respects the French, even counter resolutions would, for the reasons I have already mentioned, do little more than weaken, in a small degree, the effect the other side would have." In a letter to the Secretary, of the 31st of July, having mentioned his determination to return to Philadelphia, and stated the firmness and wisdom necessary to meet the crisis, he proceeded, "There is too much reason to believe, from the pains that have been taken before, at, and since the advice of the Senate respecting the treaty, that the prejudices against it are more extensive than is generally imagined. How should it be otherwise, when no stone has been left unturned that could impress on the minds of the people the most arrant misrepresentation

of facts; that their rights have not only been neglected, but absolutely sold; that there are no reciprocal advantages in the treaty; that the benefits are all on the side of Great Britain; and what seems to have had more weight with them than all the rest, and has been most pressed, that the treaty is made with the design to oppress the French republic, in open violation of our treaty with that nation, and contrary too to every principle of gratitude and sound policy. In time, when passion shall have yielded to sober reason, the current may possibly turn; but, in the meanwhile, this government in relation to France and England may be compared to a ship between Scylla and Charybdis. If the treaty is ratified, the partisans of the French, or rather of war and confusion, will excite them to hostile measures, or at least to unfriendly sentiments; if it is not, there is no foreseeing all the consequences that may follow as it respects Great Britain.

"It is not to be inferred from hence, that I am, or shall be disposed to quit the ground I have taken, unless circumstances more imperious than have yet come to my knowledge, should compel it; for there is but one straight course, and that is to seek truth, and to pursue it steadily. But these things are mentioned to show that a close investigation of the subject is more than ever necessary —Every step should be explored before it is taken, and every word weighed before it is uttered or delivered in writing." In a subsequent letter, in which he mentioned the increasing hostility to the treaty, he added, "All these things do not shake my determination with respect to the proposed ratification, nor will they, unless something more

imperious and unknown to me should, in the opinion of yourself and the gentlemen with you, make it advisable for me to pause."

On the 11th of August, the President, undismayed by the threatening appearances which were exhibited in various parts of the country, arrived at Philadelphia, and brought before the Cabinet a proposal for the immediate ratification of the treaty with Great Britain. The secretary of state alone advised the postponement of the measure. The President acted in accordance with the sentiments of the majority of his ministers, and the treaty was immediately ratified. The result justified the sagacity with which General Washington had acted. The violent opposition speedily subsided, and the more the provisions of the instrument were known, and the better the relations of the two countries were understood, the more unanimously was this decisive step approved by the country. Still there was a large class of persons hostile to the federal constitution, and to the foreign policy of President Washington, who took advantage of this event to propagate, for the first time, some calumnies againt his personal character, as well as his public conduct. There have been many instances in which political hostility has been transferred to private character, but when the virtues and services of Washington are considered, few instances will be found in which such an indelible stigma of ignominy and wickedness is found to rest upon the criminal parties. He was publicly represented as equally destitute of merit as a soldier and a statesman; an impeachment was threatened for his having violated the constitution by negociating a treaty without the consent

of the legislature; and lastly, he was openly accused of embezzling the public money, by drawing from the treasury more than the amount of salary annexed to his office.

The unblushing effrontery with which it was pretended that this last allegation was founded upon public documents, for a moment alarmed the minds of many who were incapable of participating in the enormous villany of its propagators. But this state of suspense was of but short duration. While the noble individual attacked preserved a dignified and contemptuous silence, the late secretary of the treasury, under whose administration the crime was said to have been committed, came forward, and proved by the public accounts that it had always been the custom of the treasury when a sum had been voted for the current year, to pay it as occasion might require; so that the amount drawn at some periods of the year exceeded, and at others fell short of the allowance for the quarter; and also, that the President himself had never touched one shilling of the compensation annexed to his office, but that it had been paid from time to time to the superintendent of his household. This explanation at once relieved the public mind, and filled it with just indignation against the charge, while the detected slanderers slunk away from the eye of the public into disgraceful obscurity.

On the 19th of August the Secretary of State resigned his place in the administration under the following circumstances*. A letter, addressed to this government, in October 1794, by the minister of the French Republic, was intercepted by the

* Judge Marshall.

captain of a British frigate, and forwarded to Mr. Hammond, by whom it was delivered about the last of July to the secretary of the treasury, who, on the arrival of the President in Philadelphia, placed it in his hands. This letter alluded to communications from Mr. Randolph, which, in the opinion of the President, were exceedingly improper. The eclaircissement which the occasion required was followed by the resignation of the secretary. For the purpose, as he alleged, of vindicating his conduct, he demanded a sight of a confidential letter which had been addressed to him by the President, and which was left in the office. His avowed design was to give this, as well as some others of the same description, to the public, in order to support the allegation that, in consequence of his attachment to France and to liberty, he had fallen a victim to the intrigues of a British and an aristocratic party. The answer given to this demand was a licence, which few political characters in a turbulent time could allow to a man who had possessed the unlimited confidence of the person giving it. "I have directed," says the President, "that you should have the inspection of my letter of the 22nd of July, agreeable to your request; and you are at full liberty to publish, without reserve, any and every private and confidential letter I ever wrote you; nay, more, every word I ever uttered to you or in your presence, from whence you can derive any advantage in your vindication."

The vacant post was offered to Mr. M'Henry, and in so offering it, the President gave him a brief view of the policy of his government. "I persuade myself, Sir," said he, "it has not escaped your

observation, that a crisis is approaching, which must, if it cannot be arrested, soon decide whether good order and good government shall be preserved, or anarchy and confusion ensue. I can most religiously aver, that I have no wish, incompatible with the dignity, happiness, and true interests of the people of this country. My ardent desire is, and my aim has been (as far as depended upon the executive department) to comply strictly with all our foreign and domestic engagements, but to keep the United States free from political connexions with every other country; to see them independent of all, and under the influence of none. In a word, I want an American character, that the powers of Europe may be convinced we act for ourselves, and not for others. This, in my judgment, is the only way to be respected abroad and happy at home; and not, by becoming the partisans of Great Britain or France, create dissensions, disturb the public tranquillity, and destroy, perhaps for ever, the cement that binds the union.

"I am satisfied these sentiments cannot be otherwise than congenial to your own; your aid, therefore, in carrying them into effect, would be flattering and pleasing to me."

At length Colonel Pickering was made secretary of state, and Mr. M'Henry took the war department. On opening the first session of the fourth Congress, in 1795, the President had the satisfaction of seeing a considerable proportion of the perils which threatened his country removed. The district of Pennsylvania, which had been agitated by disturbances, was now steadily attached to the constitution; foreign and domestic affairs seemed to be proceeding in a promising manner; while

the war with the Indians on the frontiers, to which no allusion has been made, owing to the comparatively slight degree in which the President was involved, had been brought to a favourable conclusion.

"I trust," said he, in his opening address, "I do not deceive myself, while I indulge the persuasion that I have never met you at any period, when, more than at the present, the situation of our public affairs has afforded just cause for mutual congratulation; and for inviting you to join with me in profound gratitude to the Author of all good, for the numerous and extraordinary blessings we enjoy." Then making a brief statement of the situation of the United States in their foreign relations, he thus proceeded:—

"This interesting summary of our affairs, with regard to the powers between whom and the United States, controversies have subsisted; and with regard also to our Indian neighbours, with whom we have been in a state of enmity or misunderstanding, opens a wide field for consoling and gratifying reflections. If by prudence and moderation on every side, the extinguishment of all the causes of external discord which have heretofore menaced our tranquillity, on terms compatible with our national faith and honour, shall be the happy result, how firm and how precious a foundation will have been laid for accelerating, maturing, and establishing the prosperity of our country."

Recommending a number of national objects to the attention of the legislature, the speech was concluded in the following manner:—

"Temperate discussion of the important subjects that may arise in the course of the session, and

mutual forbearance where there is a difference in opinion, are too obvious and necessary for the peace, happiness, and welfare of our country, to need any recommendation of mine."

The answer of the senate was, as usual, respectful and flattering, but the conduct of the House of Representatives indicated how much there was of disaffection in the public mind. The clause "that the confidence of his fellow-citizens in the chief magistrate remained undiminished," gave occasion to a most violent debate, which terminated in the re-committal of the address and the modification of the clause.

In the summer of 1795, M. Adet arrived in Philadelphia, in order to succeed M. Fauchet as minister of the republic of France. He had brought with him the colours of France as a present to the United States; but readily perceiving the division of sentiment respecting the policy to be observed towards his country, prevalent both in the legislature and among the people, he endeavoured to retain them, in order to present them with his own comments to Congress. This design, Washington thought it important to frustrate; and directions were accordingly given that they should be delivered to the President on the 1st of January, 1796. He accordingly presented them with a speech, in which he pointed to France as struggling for the liberty of mankind, and as recognising America as most closely related to her by this community of interest. To answer this speech was a matter of considerable delicacy, considering the suspicion with which every expression of the sentiments of the President was watched by political partisans. The following

address, therefore, in which he replied, deserves attention, as a particularly cautious declaration of his opinion and feelings :—

" Born, Sir, in a land of liberty; having early learned its value; having engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it; having, in a word, devoted the best years of my life to secure its permanent establishment in my own country; my anxious recollections, my sympathetic feelings, and my best wishes are irresistibly attracted, whensoever, in any country, I see an oppressed nation unfurl the banners of freedom. But above all, the events of the French revolution have produced the deepest solicitude, as well as the highest admiration. To call your nation brave, were to pronounce but common praise. Wonderful people! Ages to come will read with astonishment the history of your brilliant exploits. I rejoice that the period of your toils and of your immense sacrifices is approaching. I rejoice that the interesting revolutionary movements of so many years have issued in the formation of a constitution designed to give permanency to the great object for which you have contended. I rejoice that liberty, which you have so long embraced with enthusiasm—liberty, of which you have been the invincible defenders, now finds an asylum in the bosom of a regularly organised government: a government which, being formed to secure the happiness of the French people, corresponds with the ardent wishes of my heart, while it gratifies the pride of every citizen of the United States, by its resemblance to their own. On these glorious events, accept, Sir, my sincere congratulations.

" In delivering to you these sentiments, I express

not my own feelings only, but those of my fellow-citizens in relation to the commencement, the progress, and the issue of the French revolution; and they will certainly join with me in purest wishes to the Supreme Being, that the citizens of our sister republic, our magnanimous allies, may soon enjoy in peace, that liberty which they have purchased at so great a price, and all the happiness that liberty can bestow.

"I receive, Sir, with lively sensibility, the symbol of the triumphs, and of the enfranchisement of your nation, the colours of France, which you have now presented to the United States. The transaction will be announced to Congress, and the colours will be deposited with the archives of the United States, which are at once the evidence and the memorials of their freedom and independence; may these be perpetual; and may the friendship of the two republics be commensurate with their existence."

In the course of the following month, the British treaty was returned by the senate, and transmitted to England to receive the signature of the king; after which the President issued his proclamation, declaring it part of the law of the land. This measure gave great offence to the House of Representatives. The majority of that house considered that no treaty was valid which had not passed their body, and they consequently resolved on a request to the President to lay before them the instructions to Mr. Jay, together with other correspondence affecting the treaty. This request placed Washington in a situation of some difficulty. After much deliberation, however, he resolved that a compliance would introduce a precedent for a

false and dangerous principle; and he accordingly addressed to this branch of the legislature the following reply:—

"Gentlemen of the House of Representatives,

"With the utmost attention I have considered your resolution of the 24th instant, requesting me to lay before your House a copy of the instructions to the Minister of the United States, who negociated the treaty with the King of Great Britain, together with the correspondence and other documents relative to that treaty, excepting such of the said papers as any existing negociation may render improper to be disclosed.

"In deliberating upon this subject, it was impossible for me to lose sight of the principle which some have avowed in its discussion, or to avoid extending my views to the consequences which must flow from the admission of that principle.

"I trust that no part of my conduct has ever indicated a disposition to withhold any information which the constitution has enjoined it upon the President as a duty to give, or which could be required of him by either house of Congress, as a right; and with truth I affirm, that it has been, and will continue to be, while I have the honour to preside in the government, my constant endeavour to harmonise with the other branches thereof, as far as the trust delegated to me by the people of the United States, and my sense of the obligation it imposes, to preserve, protect, and defend the constitution, will permit.

"The nature of foreign negociations requires caution, and their success must often depend on secrecy; and even when brought to a conclusion,

a full disclosure of all the measures demands it, or eventual concessions which may have been proposed or contemplated, would be extremely impolitic; for this might have a pernicious influence on future negociations, or produce immediate inconveniences, perhaps danger and mischief to other persons. The necessity of such caution and secrecy was one cogent reason for vesting the power of making treaties in the President, with the advice and consent of the senate; the principle on which that body was formed, confining it to a small number of members.

"To admit, then, a right in the House of Representatives to demand, and to have, as a matter of course, all the papers respecting a negociation with a foreign power, would be to establish a dangerous precedent.

"It does not occur that the inspection of the papers asked for, can be relative to any purpose under the cognisance of the House of Representatives, except that of an impeachment, which the resolution has not expressed. I repeat that I have no disposition to withhold any information which the duty of my station will permit, or the public good shall require to be disclosed; and, in fact, all the papers affecting the negociation with Great Britain were laid before the senate, when the treaty itself was communicated for their consideration and advice.

"The course which the debate has taken on the resolution of the house, leads to some observations on the mode of making treaties under the constitution of the United States.

"Having been a member of the General Convention, and knowing the principles on which the

constitution was formed, I have ever entertained but one opinion upon this subject; and from the first establishment of the government to this moment, my conduct has exemplified that opinion. That the power of making treaties is exclusively vested in the President, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, provided two-thirds of the senators present concur; and that every treaty so made and promulgated, thenceforward becomes the law of the land. It is thus that the treaty-making power has been understood by foreign nations; and in all the treaties made with them, *we* have declared, and *they* have believed, that when ratified by the President, with the advice and consent of the senate, they become obligatory. In this construction of the constitution, every House of Representatives has heretofore acquiesced; and until the present time, not a doubt or suspicion has appeared to my knowledge, that this construction was not the true one. Nay, they have more than acquiesced; for, until now, without controverting the obligations of such treaties, they have made all the requisite provisions for carrying them into effect.

"There is also reason to believe that this construction agrees with the opinions entertained by the state conventions, when they were deliberating on the constitution, especially by those who objected to it; because there was not required in commercial treaties the consent of two-thirds of the whole number of the members of the senate, instead of two-thirds of the senators present; and because in treaties respecting territorial, and certain other rights and claims, the concurrence of three-fourths of the whole number of the members of both houses respectively, was not made necessary.

"It is a fact declared by the general convention, and universally understood, that the constitution of the United States was the result of a spirit of amity and mutual concession. And it is well known, that under this influence the smaller states were admitted to an equal representation in senate with the larger states, and that this branch of the government was invested with great powers; for on the equal participation of those powers, the sovereignty and political safety of the smaller states were deemed essentially to depend.

"If other proofs than these, and the plain letter of the constitution itself be necessary to ascertain the point under consideration, they may be found in the journals of the General Convention, which I have deposited in the office of the Department of State. In these journals it will appear that a proposition was made, that no treaty should be binding on the United States which was not ratified by a law, and that the proposition was explicitly rejected.

"As therefore it is perfectly clear to my understanding that the assent of the House of Representatives is not necessary to the validity of a treaty; as the treaty with Great Britain exhibits in itself all the objects requiring legislative provision; and on these the papers called for can throw no light: and as it is essential to the due administration of the government, that the boundaries fixed by the constitution between the different departments should be preserved; a just regard to the constitution, and to the duty of my office, under all the circumstances of this case, forbid a compliance with your request."

CHAPTER XVII.

Increased Disaffection to Washington—His Conduct towards La Fayette and his Son—Mr. Jefferson's Letter, accounting for the Unpopularity of the President—Calumnies against him—Mr. Jefferson's exculpatory Letter—The President's Reply—Declares his Resolution to retire from Public Life—Meets Congress for the last time—His Exposure of the spuriousness of certain forged Letters.

THE refusal of the President to produce the private papers out of which the British treaty had originated, seemed to remove the last restraint which, until now, the character of Washington had imposed on the vehemence of his political adversaries. The House of Representatives now openly discovered their aversion to the foreign policy of the chief magistrate, their admiration of the conduct of the revolutionists in France, and their disposition to take part with them in the struggle by which Europe was agitated. The remainder of the session of Congress was but a continued storm of the most vehement discussion, chiefly respecting the financial arrangements requisite for the liquidation of the national debt.

From these events it is agreeable to turn to one or two, which derive interest alike from the parties concerned in them, and from the aspect in which they place the private character of General Washington. The strange vicissitudes of the French

revolution had, as might have been expected, had an important influence on the fortunes of the Marquis La Fayette. He had been driven from France by the ferocity of the Jacobins, and was a prisoner at Berlin. By the inofficial exertions of Washington, through the American minister at Paris, a confidential person had been sent to Berlin to solicit his discharge. Unfortunately, however, the King of Prussia had already delivered up his prisoner to the Emperor of Germany. To this monarch, therefore, the President addressed a private communication in the following terms:—

"It will readily occur to your majesty, that occasions may sometimes exist on which official considerations would constrain the chief of a nation to be silent and passive, in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this private letter to your majesty, being persuaded that my motives will also be my apology for it.

"In common with the people of this country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis La Fayette; and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathise with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavour to mitigate the calamities they experience; among which his present confinement is not the least distressing.

"I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your majesty's consideration, whether his long imprisonment, and the confiscation of his estate, and the indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties

incident to all those circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings which recommend him to the mediation of humanity? Allow me, Sir, on this occasion to be its organ, and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this country on such conditions, and under such restrictions, as your majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.

"As it is a maxim with me not to ask what, under similar circumstances, I would not grant, your majesty will do me the justice to believe, that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom, which form the basis of sound policy and durable glory."

From this period the treatment of the Marquis was more mild, and a short time afterwards he was set at liberty: but the benevolent interest of General Washington extended from the Marquis to his family; and this he shortly afterwards had an opportunity of evincing.

In 1795, George Washington Motier La Fayette, the son of the Marquis La Fayette, made his escape from France, and arrived with his tutor at Boston. He immediately, by letter, communicated his situation to General Washington, and solicited his advice and patronage. The mother of young Fayette was then in France, and the President was surrounded by Frenchmen, the agents or friends of the administration, which had condemned the marquis. These men were ready to denounce every act of favour done to a man who was proscribed by the French government. From regard to the safety of that lady, and from prudential considerations in respect to his own official character, he thought it unadvisable to invite him immediately to the seat of government, and publicly to espouse his interest.

But he wrote confidentially to a friend in the neighbourhood of Boston, requesting him to visit the young gentleman, to acquaint him with the reason which rendered it ineligible that he should be invited into the President's family, and, to adopt the language of the letter, to "administer all the consolation that he can derive from the most unequivocal assurances of my standing in the place, and becoming to him a *father*, *friend*, *protector*, and *supporter*.

"Considering how important it is to avoid idleness and dissipation—to improve his mind, and to give him all the advantages which education can bestow, my opinion and my advice to him is, if he is qualified for admission, that he should enter as a student at the university in Cambridge, although it should be for a short time only; the expense of which, as also for every other means for his support, I will pay; and now do authorise you, my dear Sir, to draw upon me accordingly. And if it be desired that his tutor should accompany him to the university, any expense that he shall incur for the purpose, shall be borne by me in like manner."

The tutor of young Fayette thought he might with more advantage pursue his studies in private, and therefore he did not enter the university.

This young gentleman did not remain for a length of time in the United States. Returning to France, he afterwards distinguished himself as an officer in the army of Buonaparte.

Meanwhile the vehement party spirit which raged throughout America was daily diminishing the gratitude due to the unparalleled services of the President, and the veneration due to his exalted virtues. Political animosity was fast reaching that

degree at which it is blindly transferred from principles to persons; and the task of presiding over such a people and directing such a legislature as those of the United States, was daily becoming more painfully responsible. It will be instructive to hear from Mr. Jefferson, certainly one of the most acute, able, and accomplished statesmen that America ever produced, his opinions on the position in which the President was now placed. In a letter to Martin Van Buren, dated June, 1824, he has the following observations:—

"General Washington, after the retirement of his first cabinet and the composition of his second, entirely federal, and at the head of which was Mr. Pickering himself, had no opportunity of hearing both sides of any question. His measures, consequently, took more the line of the party in whose hands he was. These measures were certainly not approved by the republicans, yet were they not imputed to him, but to the counsellors around him; and his prudence so far restrained their impassioned course and bias, that no act of strong mark, during the remainder of his administration, excited much dissatisfaction. He lived too short a time after, and too much withdrawn from information to correct the views into which he had been deluded, and the continued assiduities of the party drew him into the vortex of their intemperate career; separated him farther from his real friends, and excited to actions and expressions of dissatisfaction, which grieved them, but could not loosen their affections from him. They would not suffer the temporary aberration to weigh against the immeasurable merits of his life; and although they tumbled his seducers from their places, they preserved his memory em-

balmed in their hearts with undiminished love and devotion; and there it for ever will remain embalmed, in entire oblivion of every temporary thing which might cloud the glories of his splendid life. It is vain, then, for Mr. Pickering and his friends to endeavour to falsify his character by representing him as an enemy to republicans and republican principles, and as exclusively the friend of those who were so: and had he lived longer, he would have returned to his ancient and unbiassed opinion; would have replaced his confidence in those whom the people approved and supported; and would have seen that they were not restoring and acting on the principles of his own first administration."

It cannot be doubted that the reception of Mr. Pickering into the cabinet, and the consequent identification of the President with him, contributed much to impair his popularity. At all events the opposition offered to his government, and especially to himself, now assumed a character of the utmost virulence; and some queries, propounded by the President to his cabinet respecting the course to be observed respecting France, which were written prior to the reception of the French republican minister, and which were communicated by some undiscovered treachery to a party not belonging to the government, were published; and on these it was attempted to found a charge against General Washington, unfriendly to the emancipation of the French people. Some idea may be formed of the bitterness of feeling which prompted these measures, from the following remarks from a series of essays, in which these queries were inserted:—

"The foregoing queries were transmitted for

consideration to the heads of the departments previously to a meeting, to be held at the President's house. The text needs no commentary; it has stamped upon its front, in characters brazen enough for idolatry to comprehend, perfidy and ingratitude. —To doubt in such a case was dishonourable—to proclaim those doubts treachery. For the honour of the American character and of human nature, it is to be lamented that the records of the United States exhibit such a stupendous monument of degeneracy. It will almost require the authenticity of holy writ to persuade posterity, that it is not a libel ingeniously contrived to injure the reputation of the saviour of his country."

The state paper referred to, was one of the most sacred and confidential character, and had been communicated to none but the cabinet ministers. Mr. Jefferson, therefore, as one of those ministers, determined to clear himself from all suspicion of treachery by a letter to the President, in which he most solemnly asserted his own fidelity. The answer of General Washington clearly proves that, notwithstanding his dignified silence, he was deeply sensible of the atrocious injustice of his countrymen.

"If," said he, "I had entertained any suspicion before, that the queries which have been published in Bache's paper proceeded from you, the assurances you have given of the contrary would have removed them; but the truth is, I have harboured none. I am at no loss to conjecture from what source they flowed, through what channel they were conveyed, nor for what purpose they and similar publications appear.

"As you have mentioned the subject yourself,

it would not be frank, candid, or friendly, to conceal that your conduct has been represented as derogating from that opinion I conceived you entertained of me; that to your particular friends and connexions you have described, and they have denounced me, as a person under dangerous influence; and that if I would listen *more* to some *other* opinions, all would be well. My answer has invariably been, that I had never discovered anything in the conduct of Mr. Jefferson to raise suspicions in my mind of his sincerity; that if he would retrace my public conduct while he was in the administration, abundant proofs would occur to him, that truth and right decisions were the sole objects of my pursuit; that there were as many instances within his own knowledge of my having decided *against*, as in *favour* of, the person evidently alluded to; and, moreover, that I was no believer in the infallibility of the politics or measures of any man living. In short, that I was no party man myself, and that the first wish of my heart was, if parties did exist, to reconcile them.

"To this I may add, and very truly, that until the last year or two, I had no conception that parties would or even could go the lengths I have been witness to; nor did I believe, until lately, that it was within the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent, as far as our obligations and justice would permit, of every nation of the earth, and wished, by steering a steady course, to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of

being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another; and to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them be made, by giving one side only of a subject, and that too in such exaggerated and indecent terms, as could scarcely be applied to a Nero—to a notorious defaulter,—or even to a common pickpocket.

"But enough of this. I have already gone further in the expression of my feelings than I intended."

After these evidences of a wounded spirit it will not appear remarkable that General Washington determined, at the approaching term of his second Presidency, to withdraw from the service of his country. The only cause of astonishment with posterity will be, that he submitted, in the consciousness of his own integrity, to retain so long the unthankful office of guiding a people, a large proportion of whom were so unworthy of his invaluable services, and of presiding over a legislature, one branch of which was chargeable with the same shameful insensibility to his incomparable merits. Notwithstanding the growing disaffection which was manifested in so many quarters, he had a consolation which indemnified him from suffering, that of knowing that the same policy by which he had saved his country from despotism, and elevated it to the rank of an independent nation, had also guided it through the perils of anarchy, matured its commerce, and secured it against the machinations of those bitter enemies who concealed their malignity under the pretences of patriotism. Under these convictions, he now, for the first time, began

to consider what was due to a constitution broken by public service, and to a mind distressed by the incessant invasion of enmity and malignity; and he resolved to bid a final adieu to the cares of political life, and to spend the remainder of his days in those peaceful pursuits which he had hitherto sacrificed to an almost over-weening patriotism. With these sentiments his friends had long been acquainted, and they once more employed the warmest solicitations to dissuade him from a course which they conceived to be fatal to the interests of their country. But the same unconquerable firmness which had induced him thus long to postpone all his private interests to the public good now supported his determination to withdraw for ever from the toils of office. As the period approached when his successor must be appointed, he prepared a valedictory address to the people of the United States, of which it may be truly said, that in the profundity of its political views, in the benignant spirit which it breathes throughout, and in the sublime virtue and elevated piety which it displays, it is altogether unparalleled in the whole compass of civil history *.

It was received by the majority of the people with the deepest veneration, and was esteemed as the last bequest of the greatest patriot, and the most illustrious man that America has ever produced. Many of the state legislatures inserted it at large upon their journals, and nearly all of them

* This address, from its length, would probably divert the attention of the reader from the course of the narrative. As, however, it is too important to be either omitted or abridged, it has been inserted entire in the "Supplementary Documents," at the close of the volume.

passed resolutions expressive of the deepest emotions of regret at the retirement of the President. Even the opposition contemplated the event as a national calamity, and never evinced so high an estimation of his value as when they were about to lose his services for ever.

On the 7th of December, 1796, General Washington met the national legislature for the last time. His address was manly, comprehensive, and dignified. After noticing the measures which had been adopted for the preservation of peace with the Indians, Great Britain, Spain, and Algiers, and certain negociations which contemplated similar objects, and which were then pending with Tunis and Tripoli, his address proceeded as follows :—

"To an active external commerce, the protection of a naval force is indispensable. This is manifest with regard to wars in which a state is itself a party: but besides this, it is in our own experience that the most sincere neutrality is not a sufficient guard against the depredations of nations at war. To secure respect to a neutral flag requires a naval force, organised and ready to vindicate it from insult or aggression. This may even prevent the necessity of going to war, by discouraging belligerent powers from committing such violations of the rights of the neutral party as may first or last leave no other option. From the best information I have been able to obtain, it would seem as if our trade to the Mediterranean, without a protecting force, will always be insecure; and our citizens exposed to the calamities from which numbers of them have but just been relieved.

"These considerations invite the United States to look to the means, and to set about the gradual

creation of a navy. The increasing progress of their navigation promises them, at no distant period, the requisite supply of seamen; and their means, in other respects, favour the undertaking. It is an encouragement likewise that their particular situation will give weight and influence to a moderate naval force in their hands. Will it not then be advisable to begin without delay to provide and lay up materials for the building and equipping of ships of war; and to proceed in the work by degrees, in proportion as our resources shall render it practicable without inconvenience; so that a future war of Europe may not find our commerce in the same unprotected state in which it was found by the present?"

He proceeded to recommend those establishments for the manufacturing such articles as are necessary for the defence of the country, an institution for the improvement of agriculture, a military academy, and a national university. In reference to foreign powers, he observed:—

"While in our external relations, some serious inconveniences and embarrassments have been overcome, and others lessened, it is with much pain and regret I mention that circumstances of a very unwelcome nature have lately occurred. Our trade has suffered, and is suffering, extensive injuries in the West Indies, from the cruisers and agents of the French republic; and communications have been received from its minister here, which indicate the danger of a further disturbance of our commerce by its authority; and which are in other respects far from agreeable.

"It has been my constant, sincere, and earnest wish, in conformity with that of our nation, to

maintain cordial harmony, and a perfectly friendly understanding with that republic. This wish remains unabated; and I shall persevere in the endeavour to fulfil it to the utmost extent of what shall be consistent with a just and indispensable regard to the rights and honour of our conntry; nor will I easily cease to cherish the expectation that a spirit of justice, candour, and friendship, on the part of the republic, will eventually ensure success.

"In pursuing this course, however, I cannot forget what is due to the character of our government and nation; or to a full and entire confidence in the good sense, patriotism, self-respect, and fortitude of my countrymen."

In the following manner he concluded his address.

"The situation in which I now stand, for the last time, in the midst of the representatives of the people of the United States, naturally recals the period when the administration of the present form of government commenced; and I cannot omit this occasion to congratulate you and my country on the success of the experiment; nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the universe, and Sovereign Arbiter of nations, that his providential care may still be extended to the United States; that the virtue and happiness of the people may be preserved, and that the government which they have instituted for the protection of their liberties may be perpetual."

The Senate in their reply approved the sentiments of the address, and noticing the prosperity of the United States, they added,

"Whilst contemplating the causes that produced

this auspicions result, we must acknowledge the excellence of the constitutional system, and the wisdom of the legislative provisions ; but we should be deficient in gratitude and justice, did we not attribute a great portion of these advantages to the virtue, firmness, and talents, of your administration, which have been conspicuously displayed, in the most trying times, and on the most critical occasions ; it is therefore with the sincerest regret that we now receive an official notification of your intentions to retire from the public employments of your country.

"When we review the various scenes of your public life, so long and so successfully devoted to the most arduous services, civil and military, as well during the struggles of the American revolution, as the convulsive periods of a recent date, we cannot look forward to your retirement without our warmest affections and most anxious regards accompanying you ; and without mingling with our fellow citizens at large, in the sincerest wishes for your personal happiness, that sensibility and attachment can express.

"The most effectual consolation that can offer for the loss we are about to sustain, arises from the animating reflection that the influence of your example will extend to your successors, and the United States thus continue to enjoy an able, upright, and energetic administration."

In the House of Representatives, an answer, which promised attention to the several subjects recommended in the speech, and concluded as follows, was, after pointed objection and a warm debate, voted by a large majority.

"And while we entertain a grateful conviction

that your wise, firm, and patriotic administration has been signally conducive to the success of the present form of government, we cannot forbear to express the deep sensations of regret with which we contemplate your intended retirement from office.

"As no other suitable occasion may occur, we cannot suffer the present to pass without attempting to disclose some of the emotions which it cannot fail to awaken.

"The gratitude and admiration of your countrymen are still drawn to the recollection of those resplendent virtues and talents which were so eminently instrumental to the achievement of the revolution, and of which that glorious event will ever be the memorial. Your obedience to the voice of duty and your country, when you quitted reluctantly, a second time, the retreat you had chosen, and first accepted the presidency, afforded a new proof of the devotedness of your zeal in its service, and an earnest of the patriotism and success which have characterised your administration. As the grateful confidence of the citizens in the virtues of their Chief Magistrate has essentially contributed to that success, we persuade ourselves that the millions whom we represent participate with us in the anxious solicitude of the present occasion.

"Yet we cannot be unmindful that your moderation and magnanimity, twice displayed by retiring from your exalted stations, afford examples no less rare and instructive to mankind than valuable to a republic.

"Although we are sensible that this event, of

itself, completes the lustre of a character already conspicuously unrivalled by the coincidence of virtue, talents, success, and public estimation, yet we conceive we owe it to you, sir, and still more emphatically to ourselves and to our nation (of the language of whose hearts we presume to think ourselves, at this moment, the faithful interpreters), to express the sentiments with which it is contemplated.

"The spectacle of a free and enlightened nation, offering by its representatives the tribute of unfeigned approbation to its first citizen, however novel and interesting it may be, derives all its lustre, a lustre which accident or enthusiasm could not bestow, and which adulation would tarnish, from the transcendant merit, of which it is the voluntary testimony.

"May you long enjoy that liberty which is so dear to you, and to which your name will ever be so dear. May your own virtue, and a nation's prayers, obtain the happiest sunshine for the decline of your days, and the choicest of future blessings. For our country's sake, and for the sake of republican liberty, it is our earnest wish that your example may be the guide of your successors; and thus, after being the ornament and safeguard of the present age, become the patrimony of our descendants."

In the midst of the joyful anticipations which Washington indulged of the delights of private and domestic life, he was anxious to refute some of the misrepresentations by which he had recently been assailed—and principally to expose an attempt to fix upon him the authorship of certain letters,

alleged to have been written during the revolutionary war, which seriously reflected on his integrity ; for this purpose, he addressed the following letter to the Secretary of State :—

"DEAR SIR,

"At the conclusion of my public employments, I have thought it expedient to notice the publication of certain forged letters which first appeared in the year 1776, and were obtruded upon the public as mine. They are said by the editor to have been found in a small portmanteau that I had left in the care of my mulatto servant, named Billy, who it is pretended was taken prisoner at Fort Lee, in 1776. The period when these letters were first printed will be recollected, and what were the impressions they were intended to produce on the public mind. It was then supposed to be of some consequence to strike at the integrity of the motives of the American commander-in-chief, and to paint his inclinations as at variance with his professions and his duty—another crisis in the affairs of America having occurred, the same weapon has been resorted to, to wound my character, and deceive the people.

"The letters in question have the dates, addresses, and signatures here following,"

"New York, June 12, 1776.

"To Mr. Lund Washington, at Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia. G. W.

"June 18, 1776.

"To John Park Custis, Esq., at the Hon. Benedict Calvert's Esq., Mount Airy, Maryland. G. W.

"New York, July 8, 1776.

"To Mr. Lund Washington, Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia. G. W.

"New York, July 16, 1776.

"To Mr. Lund Washington. G. W.

"New York, July 15, 1776.

"To Mr. Lund Washington. G. W.

"New York, July 22, 1776.

"To Mr. Lund Washington. G. W.

"June 24, 1776.

"To Mrs. Washington. G. W.

"At the time when these letters first appeared, it was notorious to the army immediately under my command, and particularly to the gentlemen attached to my person, that my mulatto man Billy had never been one moment in the power of the enemy. It is also a fact, that no part of my baggage, or any of my attendants, were captured during the whole course of the war. These well known facts made it unnecessary, during the war, to call the public attention to the forgery, by any express declaration of mine; and a firm reliance on my fellow-citizens, and the abundant proofs they gave of their confidence in me, rendered it alike unnecessary to take any formal notice of the revival of the imposition, during my civil administration. But as I cannot know how soon a more serious event may succeed to that which will this day take place, I have thought it a duty that I owed to myself, to my country, and to truth, now to detail the circumstances above recited, and to add my solemn declaration, that the letters herein described are a base forgery,

and that I never saw or heard of them until they appeared in print. The present letter I commit to your care, and desire it may be deposited in the office of the department of state, as a testimony of the truth to the present generation and to posterity."

CHAPTER XVIII.

General Washington attends the Inauguration of President Adams—The President's Allusion to his Predecessor—Washington retires to Mount Vernon—Brief Review of his Presidency—Dissensions between the United States and France—Washington appointed Commander-in-Chief of the American Armies—Reconciliation between the two Powers—Death of General Washington.

In the whole life of Washington there were few days either prouder or happier than that on which he divested himself of the solicitudes and toils of the supreme office, and only retained its lasting honours. The sources of his pleasure were found both in public and private considerations. On the one hand, he had reached the period when he might honourably indulge his fond partiality for the pursuits and enjoyments of domestic life. He could retire from the public service and carry away with him recollections which no man ever enjoyed before him. He could feed an honest pride with the reflection that he had guided his country safely through a struggle for national existence, the record of which is one uninterrupted tragedy; and through the equal difficulties of settling and administering an untried constitution. He could reflect too, that he had so conducted himself amidst opposing interests and contending parties as to

leave behind him a prospering country, an unspotted reputation, and an invaluable example.

His pleasure, however, on this occasion was not entirely unmingled. In a letter to General Knox, written the day before the expiration of his office, we find the following passage, which one would suppose no American will ever be able to read without a blush, and which is calculated to excite strong emotions in every mind:—

"To the wearied traveller who sees a resting place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself; but to be suffered to do *this* in peace is too much to be endured by *some*. To misrepresent my motives; to reprobate my politics; and to weaken the confidence which has been reposed in my administration, are objects which cannot be relinquished by those who will be satisfied with nothing short of a change in our political system. The consolation, however, which results from conscious rectitude, and the approving voice of my country unequivocally expressed by its representatives, deprives their sting of its poison, and places in the same point of view both the weakness and malignity of their efforts.

"Although the prospect of retirement is most grateful to my soul, and I have not a wish to mix again in the great world, or to partake in its politics, yet I am not without my regrets at parting with (perhaps never more to meet) the few intimates whom I love; among these be assured you are one."

In February 1797, the votes for the first and second magistrates of the United States were opened and counted in the presence of both branches of the legislature, when it was found that Mr. Adams was elected President, and Mr. Jefferson

Vice-President for four years, commencing with the 4th of March ensuing. On that day a vast concourse of civil functionaries and private citizens assembled to witness the administration of the prescribed oaths, and an ineffaceable impression was made on the minds of all present by the entrance of the first of American heroes, patriots, and Presidents to honour the inauguration of his successor. With his noble countenance beaming with smiles of satisfaction he approached the newly chosen magistrates, and greeted them with cordial congratulations; while the President in his address delivered on taking the oaths, seized the opportunity of offering the following tribute to his illustrious predecessor:

"Such is the amiable and interesting system of government (and such are some of the abuses to which it may be exposed) which the people of America have exhibited, to the admiration and anxiety of the wise and virtuous of all nations, for eight years, under the administration of a citizen, who, by a long course of great actions, regulated by prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude, conducting a people inspired with the same virtues, and animated with the same ardent patriotism and love of liberty, to independence and peace, to increasing wealth and unexampled prosperity, has merited the gratitude of his fellow-citizens, commanded the highest praises of foreign nations, and secured immortal glory with posterity.

"In that retirement which is his voluntary choice, may he long live to enjoy the delicious recollection of his services, the gratitude of mankind, the happy fruits of them to himself and the world, which are daily increasing, and that splendid prospect of the future fortunes of his country,

which is opening from year to year. His name may be still a rampart, and the knowledge that he lives, a bulwark against all open or secret enemies of his country's peace."

A cursory comparison of the state of the country in 1788 with its condition after the eight years of Washington's Presidency will fully justify these remarks :—

At home, a firm credit had been established; an immense floating debt had been funded, in a manner perfectly satisfactory to the creditors; an ample revenue had been provided; "those difficulties which a system of internal taxation, on its first introduction, was doomed to encounter, were completely removed;" and the authority of the government was firmly established. Funds for the gradual payment of the debt had been provided; a considerable part of it had been actually discharged; and that system, which has now operated its entire extinction, had been matured and adopted. The agricultural and commercial wealth of the nation had been increased beyond all former example. The numerous tribes of warlike Indians inhabiting the immense tracts which lie between the then cultivated country and the Mississippi, had been taught, by arms and by justice, to respect the United States, and to continue in peace. This desirable object having been accomplished, that humane system was established for civilising and furnishing them with the conveniences of life, which improves their condition while it secures their attachment.

Abroad, the differences with Spain had been accommodated; and the free navigation of the Mississippi had been acquired, with the use of New

Orleans as a depôt for three years, and afterwards until some other equivalent place should be designated. Those causes of mutual exasperation, which had threatened to involve the United States in a war with the greatest maritime power in the world, had been removed, and the military posts which had been occupied within their territory from their existence as a nation, had been evacuated. Treaties had been formed with Algiers and with Tripoli, and no captures appear to have been made by Tunis; so that the Mediterranean was opened to American vessels.

The contrast between this state of affairs and that which met the view of General Washington, when he first assumed the presidency, is most singular—the more so when it is regarded as mainly owing, under the blessing of Providence, to the sagacity and virtue of one man. .

Generel Washington was now desirous of reaching Mount Vernon with as much privacy and despatch as possible. A part of this object, however, was frustrated by the enthusiasm of thousands who obtained intelligence of his route, at all parts of which they joined him, and formed a continued guard of honour; and even on his arrival, his privacy was long disturbed by the presentation of innumerable addresses.

It will be recollected that all that part of General Washington's foreign policy by which his popularity was diminished, had for its object the prevention of those evils which he foresaw as the certain results of too close and dependent a connexion with republican France; and no long time after his retirement, the justness of his views became apparent to the whole American people. General Pinck-

ney had been appointed minister plenipotentiary for purposes which were detailed with distinctness in his credentials; viz.—"To maintain that good understanding which, from the commencement of the alliance, had subsisted between the two nations, and to efface unfavourable impressions, banish suspicions, and restore that cordiality which was at once the evidence and pledge of a friendly union." In France, however, he encountered dispositions of a very different character. The directory at once announced to him their determination not to receive another minister from the United States until after the redress of certain grievances. This declaration was succeeded by an address from the president of the directory, in which the intention was distinctly expressed of controuling the American government, by exerting their influence on the minds of the people. To complete this system of hostility, a number of American vessels were captured, and condemned, ostensibly for want of a document, which the commercial treaty between the two nations had hitherto rendered unnecessary. Again, the United States deputed three envoys extraordinary to the Court of Paris, but in vain; for in the spring, despatches arrived from the American minister, announcing the total failure of their mission under circumstances of the greatest indignity towards the United States.

Measures were now instituted in Congress for the purpose of defence and retaliation; preparations were made for the organisation of a regular army. The President was authorised to raise twelve additional regiments of infantry, and one of cavalry, to serve during the continuance of the existing differences between the United States and the

French republic. Immediately all eyes were turned to General Washington; and events seemed to indicate that his last days were to complete the sacrifice of his whole life to the service of his country. The general, however, was not apprehensive of direct and open hostilities; he was convinced that the French people were cheated by the pretences of an anarchical faction to represent the voice of the people; and he anticipated that as soon as this fallacy should be exposed by a general movement of the nation for the defence of its rights, active hostilities would cease.

In May 1798, he received a letter from Colonel Hamilton, intimating the universal expectation of the people: to this the general replied as follows:—

"You may be assured that my mind is deeply impressed with the present situation of public affairs, and not a little agitated by the outrageous conduct of France towards the United States, and at the inimical conduct of those partisans who aid and abet her measures. You may believe further, from assurances equally sincere, that if there was any thing in my power to be done consistently, to avert or lessen the danger of the crisis, it should be rendered with hand and heart.

"But, my dear Sir, dark as matters appear at present, and expedient as it is to be prepared for the worst that can happen (and no man is more disposed to this measure than I am) I cannot make up my mind yet, for the expectation of open war; or, in other words, for a formidable invasion by France. I cannot believe, although I think her capable of any thing, that she will attempt to do more than she has done. When she perceives the spirit and policy of this country rising into resis-

tance, and that she has falsely calculated upon support from a large part of the people to promote her views and influence in it, she will desist even from these practices, unless unexpected events in Europe, or the acquisition of Louisiana and the Floridas should induce her to continue them. And I believe further, that although the leaders of their party in this country will not change their sentiments, they will be obliged to change their plan, or the mode of carrying it on. The effervescence which is appearing in all quarters, and the desertion of their followers, will frown them into silence, at at least for a while.

"If I did not view things in this light, my mind would be infinitely more disquieted than it is: for if a crisis should arrive when a sense of duty, or a call from my country, should become so imperious as to leave me no choice, I should prepare for relinquishment, and go with as much reluctance from my present peaceful abode, as I should go to the tombs of my ancestors."

To a somewhat similar letter from the President, he replied as follows:—

"At the epoch of my retirement, an invasion of these states by an European power, or even the probability of such an event in my days, was so far from being contemplated by me, that I had no conception either that or any other occurrence would arise in so short a period, which could turn my eyes from the shades of Mount Vernon. But this seems to be the age of wonders. And it is reserved for intoxicated and lawless France (for purposes of Providence far beyond the reach of human ken) to slaughter her own citizens, and to disturb the repose of all the world besides. From a view of

the past, from a prospect of the present, and of that which seems to be expected, it is not easy for me to decide satisfactorily on the part it might best become me to act. In case of actual invasion by a formidable force, I certainly should not intrench myself under the cover of age and retirement, if my services should be required by my country, to assist in repelling it. And if there be good cause to expect such an event, which certainly must be better known to the government than to private citizens, delay in preparing for it may be dangerous, improper, and not to be justified by prudence. The uncertainty, however, of the latter, in my mind, creates my embarrassment; for I cannot bring it to believe, regardless as the French are of treaties, and of the laws of nations, and capable as I conceive them to be of any species of despotism and injustice, that they will attempt to invade this country, after such an uniform and unequivocal expression of the determination of the people in all parts to oppose them with their lives and fortunes. That they have been led to believe, by their agents and partisans among us, that we are a divided people, that the latter are opposed to their own government, and that the show of a small force would occasion a revolt, I have no doubt; and how far these men, grown desperate, will further attempt to deceive, and may succeed in keeping up the deception, is problematical. Without that, the folly of the Directory in such an attempt would, I conceive, be more conspicuous, if possible, than their wickedness.

"Having with candour made this disclosure of the state of my mind, it remains only for me to add, that to those who know me best, it is best known,

that should imperious circumstances induce me to exchange once more the smooth paths of retirement for the thorny ways of public life, at a period too when repose is more congenial to nature, that it would be productive of sensations which can be more easily conceived than expressed."

To the Secretary at War he was somewhat more explicit:—

"It cannot be necessary," said he, "for me to premise to you, or others, who know my sentiments, that to quit the tranquillity of retirement, and enter the boundless field of responsibility, would be productive of sensations which a better pen than I possess would find it difficult to describe. Nevertheless, the principle by which my conduct has been actuated through life, would not suffer me, in any great emergency, to withhold any services I could render when required by my country, especially in a case where its dearest rights are assailed by lawless ambition and intoxicated power, and in violation of solemn compacts, and of laws which govern all civilised nations; and this too with the obvious intent to sow thick the seeds of disunion, for the purpose of subjugating our government, and destroying our independence and happiness.

"Under circumstances like these, accompanied by an actual invasion of our territory, it would be difficult for me at any time to remain an idle spectator, under the plea of age or retirement. With sorrow, it is true, I should quit the shades of my peaceful abode, and the ease and happiness I now enjoy, to encounter anew the turmoils of war, to which possibly my strength and powers might be found incompetent. These, however,

should not be stumbling blocks in my own way. But there are other things highly important for me to ascertain and settle, before I could give a definitive answer to your question.

"First, The propriety in the opinion of the public, so far as that opinion has been expressed in conversation, of my appearing again on the public theatre, after declaring the sentiments I did in my valedictory address of September, 1796.

"Secondly, A conviction in my own breast, from the best information that can be obtained, that it is the wish of my country that its military force should be committed to my charge; and

"Thirdly, That the army now to be formed should be so appointed as to afford a well grounded hope of its doing honour to the country, and credit to him who commands it in the field."

Before these letters had reached the seat of government, the President had nominated General Washington to the senate as lieutenant-general and commander-in-chief of the American armies, and Mr. M'Henry, the Secretary of War, was instructed to convey this intelligence to the general at Mount Vernon. "If," said the President, in his instructions, "the general should decline the appointment, all the world will be silent, and respectfully acquiesce; if he should accept it, all the world, except the enemies of this country, will rejoice." To the President's communication, General Washington returned the following reply:—

"DEAR SIR,

"I had the honour, on the evening of the 11th instant, to receive from the hands of the Secretary of War, your favour of the 7th, announc-

ing that you had, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appointed me Lieutenant-general and Commander in Chief of the armies raised, or to be raised for the service of the United States.

"I cannot express how greatly affected I am at this new proof of public confidence, and at the highly flattering manner in which you have been pleased to make the communication. At the same time, I must not conceal from you my earnest wish that the choice had fallen upon a man less declined in years, and better qualified to encounter the usual vicissitudes of war.

"You know, Sir, what calculations I had made relative to the probable course of events on my retiring from office, and the determination with which I had consoled myself, of closing the remnant of my days in my present peaceful abode. You will therefore be at no loss to conceive and appreciate the sensations I must have experienced, to bring my mind to any conclusion that would pledge me at so late a period of life, to leave scenes I sincerely love, to enter upon the boundless field of public action, incessant trouble, and high responsibility.

"It was not possible for me to remain ignorant of, or indifferent to, recent transactions. The conduct of the Directory of France towards our country; their insidious hostility to its government; their various practices to withdraw the affections of the people from it; the evident tendency of their arts, and those of their agents, to countenance and invigorate opposition; their disregard of solemn treaties and the laws of nations; their war upon our defenceless commerce; their treatment of our ministers of peace, and their demands, amounting

to tribute, could not fail to excite in me sentiments corresponding with those my countrymen have so generally expressed in their affectionate address to you.

"Believe me, Sir, no man can more cordially approve the wise and prudent measures of your administration. They ought to inspire universal confidence, and will, no doubt, combined with the state of things, call from Congress such laws and means as will enable you to meet the full force and extent of the crisis.

"Satisfied, therefore, that you have sincerely wished and endeavoured to avert war, and exhausted to the last drop the cup of reconciliation, we can, with pure hearts, appeal to Heaven for the justice of our cause; and may confidently trust the final result to that kind Providence who has heretofore, and so often, signally favoured the people of the United States.

"Thinking in this manner, and seeing how incumbent it is upon every person of every description to contribute, at all times, to his country's welfare, and especially in a moment like the present, when every thing we hold dear and sacred is so seriously threatened, I have finally determined to accept the commission of Commander in Chief of the armies of the United States, with the reserve only, that I shall not be called into the field, until the army is in a situation to require my presence, or it becomes indispensable by the urgency of circumstances.

"In making this reservation, I beg it to be understood, that I do not mean to withhold any assistance to arrange and organise the army, which you may think I can afford. I take the liberty

also to mention that I must decline having my acceptance considered as drawing after it any immediate charge upon the public, or that I can receive any emoluments annexed to the appointment, before I am in a situation to incur expense."

"I have the honour, &c.,

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

The results of these defensive measures quickly demonstrated that General Washington had not miscalculated the temper of France. The energy with which they were conducted, doubtless, recalled to the recollection of the French, the events of the memorable struggle with Great Britain; and they testified no disposition with such an example before their eyes to incur the hazards of a transatlantic war. Pacific overtures were indirectly made, which the President, with something like the wisdom of his predecessor, cheerfully accepted; and negociations were immediately commenced, which terminated in the restoration of harmony between the two states.

General Washington did not live to see the happy issue of these transactions. There had seemed to be a sort of fatality, by which, throughout the course of a long life, he had been destined to live for others; and it now appeared to be the will of heaven, that so soon as the circumstances of his country enabled it to dispense with the tutelary presence of their founder and their benefactor, he should be summoned away from the scenes of earth, so that the innocent indulgences of the evening of his days might not constitute an exception to a life of such entire self-devotion.

On Friday, December the 13th, 1799, while

superintending some improvements at Mount Vernon, he was exposed to a slight rain, which wetted his neck and hair; some slight precautions against cold were immediately taken, but in the course of the night he was attacked with acute inflammation of the windpipe, by which respiration was rendered laborious, and swallowing difficult and painful. Without medical advice, he determined upon losing blood; and for this purpose, sent for some person accustomed to the use of the lancet, and ordered him to take fourteen ounces from the arm. The family physician, Dr. Craik, arrived at eleven o'clock on Saturday morning, and perceiving the critical nature of the case, recommended an immediate consultation, and Doctors Dick and Brown were called in. This measure, however, was unavailing. From the first indication of the disease, General Washington was convinced that the great enemy was approaching. He submitted to medical treatment without encouraging the slightest expectation of relief; and some hours before his death expressed, with great difficulty, his wish that it might be discontinued. It is, doubtless, owing to the extreme difficulty with which he articulated, that we possess so few of the last words of the dying hero. A few hours before his decease, he informed his attendants that his affairs were in good order; that he had made his will, and that his public business was but two days in arrear. One more precious declaration, however, remains to us, transmitted to posterity by the physician to whom it was addressed. It is characterised by the same simplicity which, through life, had invested every part of his character with majesty and beauty. "Doctor," said he, "I am dying, and have been dying for a long time; but I

am not afraid to die." The whole history of General Washington's life justifies our denominating this the language of heroism; but that history, also, affords us good ground for believing that it was the language of Christian heroism,—the natural expression of a heart whose ease was not derived from self-complacency, nor from philosophical speculation, but which drew from the rock of Evangelical truth, the living stream of "peace, which passeth understanding." At half-past eleven o'clock, on Saturday evening, after an illness of twenty-four hours, he closed his eyes in death.

How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould;
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung:
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

CHAPTER XIX.

Proceedings of the Legislature in consequence of the Death of General Washington—His Character.

So sudden was the event by which the United States were bereaved of General Washington, that the fact of his illness was not known to the Legislature until they received the report of his death. It first reached the House of Representatives as an unaccredited rumour, but it occasioned for several minutes the silence of utter dismay, until Mr. Marshall * rose in his place, and observed, that though the information was not certain, yet there was too much reason to believe that it was true. "After receiving intelligence," he added, "of a national calamity so heavy and afflicting, the House of Representatives can be but ill fitted for public business." Both Houses immediately adjourned.

On opening the House the next morning, Mr. Marshall addressed the Chair in the following manner:—

"The melancholy event which was yesterday announced with doubt, has been rendered but too certain. Our Washington is no more! The hero, the patriot, and the sage of America—the man on whom, in times of danger, every eye was turned,

* Afterwards Chief Justice of the United States, and one of the biographers of General Washington.

and all hopes were placed, lives now only in his own great actions, and in the hearts of an affectionate and afflicted people.

"If, Sir, it had even not been usual openly to testify respect for the memory of those whom Heaven has selected as its instruments for dispensing good to man, yet such has been the uncommon worth, and such the extraordinary incidents which have marked the life of him whose loss we all deplore, that the whole American nation, impelled by the same feelings, would call, with one voice, for a public manifestation of that sorrow which is so deep and so universal.

"More than any other individual, and as much as to one individual was possible, has he contributed to found this our wide-spreading empire, and to give to the western world independence and freedom.

"Having effected the great object for which he was placed at the head of our armies, we have seen him convert the sword into the ploughshare, and sink the soldier into the citizen.

"When the debility of our federal system had become manifest, and the bonds which connected this vast continent were dissolving, we have seen him the chief of those patriots who formed for us a constitution, which, by preserving the union, will, I trust, substantiate and perpetuate those blessings which our revolution had promised to bestow.

"In obedience to the general voice of his country, calling him to preside over a great people, we have seen him once more quit the retirement he loved, and in a season more stormy and tempestuous than war itself, with calm and wise determination pursue the true interest of the nation, and

contribute, more than any other could contribute, to the establishment of that system of policy which will, I trust, yet preserve our peace, our honour, and independence.

"Having twice been unanimously chosen the chief magistrate of a free people, we have seen him at a time when his re-election with universal suffrage could not be doubted, afford to the world a rare instance of moderation, by withdrawing from his high station to the peaceful walks of private life.

"However the public confidence may change, and the public affections fluctuate with respect to others; with respect to him, they have in war and in peace, in public and in private life, been as steady as his own firm mind, and as constant as his own exalted virtues.

"Let us then, Mr. Speaker, pay the last tribute of respect and affection to our departed friend. Let the grand council of the nation display those sentiments which the nation feels. For this purpose I hold in my hand some resolutions, which I take the liberty of offering to the House."

The resolutions, after stating the death of General Washington, were as follow:—

"Resolved, That this House will wait on the President in condolence of this mournful event.

"Resolved, That the Speaker's chair be shrouded with black, and that the members and officers of the House wear black during the session.

"Resolved, That a committee, in conjunction with one from the Senate, be appointed to consider on the most suitable manner of paying honour to the memory of the man, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-citizens."

These resolutions had no sooner passed, than a

written message was received from the President, transmitting a letter from Mr. Lear, "which," said the message, "will inform you that it has pleased Divine Providence to remove from this life our excellent fellow-citizen George Washington, by the purity of his life, and a long series of services to his country, rendered illustrious through the world. It remains for an affectionate and grateful people, in whose hearts he can never die, to pay suitable honour to his memory."

On this mournful event, the Senate addressed to the President the following letter:—

"The Senate of the United States respectfully take leave, Sir, to express to you their deep regret for the loss their country sustains in the death of General George Washington.

"This event, so distressing to all our fellow-citizens, must be peculiarly heavy to you, who have long been associated with him in *deeds of patriotism*. Permit us, Sir, to mingle our tears with yours. On this occasion it is manly to weep. To lose such a man, at such a crisis, is no common calamity to the world. Our country mourns a father. The Almighty Disposer of human events has taken from us our greatest benefactor and ornament. It becomes us to submit with reverence to Him who 'maketh darkness his pavilion.'

"With patriotic pride we review the life of our Washington, and compare him with those of other countries who have been pre-eminent in fame.—Ancient and modern names are diminished before him. Greatness and guilt have too often been allied; but *his* fame is whiter than it is brilliant. The destroyers of nations stood abashed at the majesty of *his* virtues. It reproved the intemper-

ance of their ambition, and darkened the splendour of victory. The scene is closed, and we are no longer anxious lest misfortune should sully his glory; he has travelled on to the end of his journey, and carried with him an increasing weight of honour; he has deposited it safely, where misfortune cannot tarnish it, where malice cannot blast it. Favoured of Heaven, he departed without exhibiting the weakness of humanity; magnanimous in death, the darkness of the grave could not obscure his brightness.

"Such was the man whom we deplore. Thanks to God, his glory is consummated. Washington yet lives on earth in his spotless example—his spirit is in heaven.

"Let his countrymen consecrate the memory of the heroic general, the patriotic statesman, and the virtuous sage. Let them teach their children never to forget that the fruits of his labours and his example *are their inheritance.*"

To which the President made the following answer:—

"I receive, with the most respectful and affectionate sentiments, in this impressive address, the obliging expressions of your regret for the loss our country has sustained in the death of her most esteemed, beloved, and admired citizen.

"In the multitude of my thoughts and recollections on this melancholy event, you will permit me to say, that I have seen him in the days of adversity, in some of the scenes of his deepest distress, and most trying perplexities. I have also attended him in his highest elevation, and most prosperous felicity, with uniform admiration of his wisdom, moderation, and constancy.

"Among all our original associates in that memorable *league of this continent* in 1774, which first expressed the sovereign will of a free nation in America, he was the only one remaining in the general government. Although with a constitution more enfeebled than his, at an age when he thought it necessary to prepare for retirement, I feel myself alone, bereaved of my last brother; yet I derive a strong consolation from the unanimous disposition which appears in all ages and classes to mingle their sorrows with mine on this common calamity to the world.

"The life of our Washington cannot suffer by a comparison with those of other countries, who have been most celebrated and exalted by fame. The attributes and decorations of *royalty* could only have served to eclipse the majesty of those virtues which made him from being a modest *citizen*, a more resplendent luminary. Misfortune, had he lived, could hereafter have sullied his glory only with those superficial minds, who, believing that characters and actions are marked by success alone, rarely deserve to enjoy it. Malice could never blast his honour, and envy made him a singular exception to her universal rule. For himself, he had lived long enough to life and to glory. For his fellow citizens, if their prayers could have been answered, he would have been immortal; for me, his departure is at a most unfortunate moment. Trusting, however, in the wise and righteous dominion of Providence over the passions of men, and the results of their councils and actions, as well as over their lives, nothing remains for me but *humble resignation*.

"His example is now complete; and it will

teach wisdom and virtue to magistrates, citizens, and men, not only in the present age, but in future generations, as long as our history shall be read. If a Trajan found a Pliny, a Marcus Aurelius can never want biographers, eulogists, or historians."

A joint committee of the two Houses reported the following resolutions :—

"That a marble monument be erected by the United States at the city of Washington, and that the family of General Washington be requested to permit his body to be deposited under it; and that the monument be so designed as to commemorate the great events of his military and political life.

"That there be a funeral procession from Congress Hall to the German Lutheran Church, in memory of General Washington, on Thursday the 26th instant, and that an oration be prepared at the request of Congress, to be delivered before both Houses on that day; and that the President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives, be desired to request one of the members of Congress to prepare and deliver the same.

"That it be recommended to the people of the United States to wear crape on the left arm, as mourning for thirty days.

"That the President of the United States be requested to direct a copy of these resolutions to be transmitted to Mrs. Washington, assuring her of the profound respect Congress will ever bear to her person and character, of their condolence on the late affecting dispensation of Providence, and entreating her assent to the interment of the remains of General Washington in the manner expressed in the first resolution.

"That the President be requested to issue his

proclamation, notifying to the people throughout the United States the recommendation contained in the third resolution."

The President transmitted the resolutions of Congress to Mrs. Washington, to which she replied in the following affecting terms :—

" Taught by the great example which I have so long had before me, never to oppose my private wishes to the public will, I must consent to the request made by Congress, which you have had the goodness to transmit to me ; and in doing this, I need not, I cannot say, what a sacrifice of individual feeling I make to a sense of duty."

His body, in accordance with the wish expressed in his will*, was interred in the family vault at Mount Vernon ; but the occasion was marked throughout America by religious services, funeral orations, and every demonstration of unaffected grief.

General Washington died in his sixty-seventh year. His constitution had always been robust, and although it had recently suffered in some degree from the labours and vexations of political life, yet it is evident from the amount of business which he daily accomplished, that it retained to the last much of its pristine vigour. His person was fine, his stature and bearing erect, easy, and dignified, and he is said by one of his most intimate friends to have been " The best horseman of his age, and the most graceful figure that could be seen on horseback."

It is not an easy task to delineate his character

* This is one of the " Supplementary Documents " introduced at the close of this volume.

with minuteness and accuracy. It was marked by few prominent and distinguishing features. Though as a whole it exhibited a singular instance of greatness, it possessed but few individual elements in which it far surpassed the higher class of men. Its imposing effect is more dependent upon the nice balance and exact symmetry of parts, than upon the commanding stature of any of his faculties, if estimated singly. Yet there was in him, as was remarked of Sir Thomas More *, whom, in some respects, he strongly resembled, a certain original homeliness, and even roughness, which relieves the insipidity of a character in which the physical passions and the moral powers are seen in such perfect equipoise.

It is obvious to remark that the greatness of Washington did not consist in any extraordinary development of the intellectual faculties. He was not pre-eminently an intellectual man. Though he possessed that acuteness of perception which seems gradually to unravel an intricate subject, and to pierce as far into futurity as is permitted to men—yet his mind was slow in its operations, and thus resembles an optical instrument, which is difficult of adjustment, but which, when regulated by care, brings into distinct view the most minute and distant objects. Thus his conversation rarely developed the exercise of a discursive intellect, or of a brilliant imagination, though it always indicated a sound understanding, and the temperate movements of a well regulated mind.

As little did his greatness depend upon his literary acquirements. For such pursuits he had

* Life of Sir T. More by Sir J. Mackintosh.

through life but little leisure, and apparently no very marked predilection. His composition was nervous and correct, warmed occasionally by a zealous interest in his subject, and doubtless formed by the perusal of excellent models, but generally diffuse, and partaking of all the characteristics of his conversation, and his public addresses. There is indeed a deep interest attaching to all his written remains; but it will be generally found to terminate upon the comprehensive views which they exhibit, and upon the patriotic, moral, and religious sentiments by which they are occasionally elevated into perfect sublimity. They indicate but little originality or fancy. He was naturally averse to speculation, and seems to have estimated everything according to its practical tendency. At the same time it is proper to distinguish between his system of opinions, and those of a contemporary school of pseudo-philosophers in France, who pretended to tread in his footsteps, but whose notions, professedly based upon expediency, tended to supersede every moral duty, and to emancipate mankind from the tender bonds of their primary and instinctive emotions. As little is he to be confounded with some other apostles of liberty, who, while they offer a feigned homage to virtue, subordinate its sanctions to short-sighted considerations of utility.

Nor is the greatness of Washington to be attributed in any degree to that good fortune to which so many military commanders have owed their fame and success. His whole life was one of constant difficulty and frequent disappointment. An attentive reader of his history cannot fail to be struck with the rare exceptions of success which

crowned his best efforts; and will only feel surprise that, amidst such a succession of distressing failures, his confidence in the justice of his cause, and his overwhelming sense of duty, preserved him from abandoning in despair the great designs which he had formed.

The elements of his greatness are chiefly to be discovered in the moral features of his character. In this point of view it is as easy to account for his superiority to many men of equal celebrity, as it is for the greater and more enduring benefits which he has conferred upon mankind. There have been many whose commanding powers of mind, stimulated by personal ambition or some less worthy passion, have placed them in a position to influence the destinies of nations. In reviewing their history the mind is captivated by their talents, awed by the vastness of their designs, sympathises in their elation, and participates for a moment the glory of their success. But history knows of but one, raised by his virtues to a position of supreme command, who identified himself with his people in all but the prosperity he achieved for them, and bequeathed to them the blessings of peace and freedom, without injury to a single nation upon the face of the globe. In all other instances the elevation of the individual has cast upon succeeding generations a long and gloomy shadow of public adversity or political subserviency; but the greatness of Washington stands as under a vertical luminary, while the whole nation, of whom he was the centre, far and near, partake its genial warmth and rejoice in its reflected beams.

In investigating more particularly the character of General Washington, we may first advert to the

spotless integrity which shines throughout his life. This was indeed its most prominent feature, and offers the only means of accounting for the confidence placed in him by a whole nation in the most critical period of their history. So entire was this confidence that it seemed at times like a species of faith, reposed in him as in a secondary Providence guiding their great affairs. This integrity was carried into every part of his conduct, and evinced itself in every exertion of his influence. In all the departments of civil and military administration he showed himself unbiassed by the claims of affinity and friendship, and surrounded himself only with those whose abilities fitted them to fill the stations to which they were appointed. That such a course of conduct should expose him to much personal hostility was inevitable, but it found its appropriate reward in the final success of his schemes and the stability of his government.

To this he added an almost childlike simplicity of character. This, however, does not seem to have prejudiced his success in the difficult and delicate affairs which he was called to manage. Though incapable of manœuvre himself, he had a sufficiently clear insight into human character to enable him to detect the insidious designs of others; a curious instance of which is seen in the manner in which he frustrated the intentions of the French minister, and which has already been noticed in this volume *.

Another prominent feature in the character of General Washington, which would seem almost too obvious to be dwelt upon, was his patriotism.

* Page 252.

Yet even the love of his country did not interpose to alienate a more general sense of duty, though, if any partiality could have had such an effect, it would undoubtedly have been this. From the commencement to the close of a long and laborious life, he sacrificed to it his personal ease, his domestic pleasures, the care of a large and precarious property—every thing in fact that is usually held most dear. Under the influence of this absorbing sentiment, he sternly refused the slightest remuneration for the most unprecedented services. Amidst all the intrigues of faction, and the more discouraging attacks of suspicion and ingratitude, it retained its influence unimpaired. In the midst of a disastrous war, though he received daily evidence of the inability of the legislature to direct it, it prompted him continually to defer to their authority, and to perform the unthankful duty of employing his own resources to remedy the effects of their ignorance and caprice. Indeed, nothing but the influence of this powerful feeling could have induced him to relinquish perpetually the pursuits of agriculture and the pleasures of private life, for which he had so great a predilection, in order to encounter the dangers of war, and the vexations and embarrassments of political office.

In connection with this feature of his character, it would be impossible to omit some notice of his extraordinary patience in the endurance of privation and failure. In this he was distinguished from the majority of those who have acquired their fame by military exploits. Their energies have generally been dependant upon the stimulus of success, and in many cases the first frown of disappointment has awakened a stuperstitious senti-

ment, under the influence of which ambition and hope have alike been paralyzed. But in the mind of Washington the rapid succession of difficulties seem only to have had the effect of developing the irresistible energy of his soul, and the thorns which continually hedged his path only offered fuel to the flame of his patriotic zeal.

If it were not proved by constant observation, that modesty is the invariable concomitant of true greatness, we might have been unprepared to discover it in the character of this extraordinary man. If any man could be pardoned for entertaining exalted opinions of himself from perpetually seeing that his views were corroborated by successive events, and that the implicit dependence of his countrymen upon his wisdom was the surest safeguard of their prosperity, that man would be General Washington. Throughout the American war the rejection of his advice was the certain presage of disaster and defeat; and in the subsequent government of the United States, all the civil commotion and commercial failure which embarrassed the politics of the times are clearly traceable to the opponents of his government. Of this, General Washington must have been fully sensible; yet even this could not debauch the native modesty of his character. Not that he was ever chargeable with a want of proper confidence in himself; on the contrary, he was remarkable for nothing more than for the just estimate which he entertained of his own powers. He clearly discerned their true limits, and he contemplated nothing in which he did not ultimately succeed. No man ever discovered a more complete knowledge of himself, and, while he was never depressed

by a sense of his defects, the consciousness of his great abilities never interfered to disturb the equability of his mind.

This virtue, however, was not without its corresponding temptation. He was constantly assailed, not indeed by the presumptuous flattery of individuals, but by the more dangerous enthusiasm of an enlightened and grateful nation. With that nation he was identified; he was thoroughly acquainted with the sources and extent of their prosperity; he sympathized with their emotions, and he could not but have felt how due was their tribute to their liberator and founder. Yet throughout the course of his public life we find no instance in which he was betrayed into the slightest exhibition of vanity or pride.

The strict watchfulness which in this respect he maintained over his feelings can only be traced to those elevated principles by which he was habitually actuated. It is not enough to say of him that his morals were pure; there is every reason to believe that his virtue was spiritualised into piety. Throughout his public and private life nothing was more conspicuous than his profound respect for religion; while those who were privileged to witness his conduct in domestic retirement, could bear testimony to the unostentatious manner in which he enjoyed the pleasures, and exhibited the effects, of private devotion. He was but little addicted to conversation on religious subjects, and this was in perfect consistency with his ordinary reserve; but the whole tenor of his character justifies the belief, that he had a vital interest in those great truths for which all his public acts indicate so deep a veneration.

It would be pleasing to trace from these causes that singular disinterestedness in which he has no rival among the few possessors of equal power and influence. Even in the hour of victory he seems never to have experienced the rapture of the victor: all the sentiments of his soul appear to have been chastened down to that sober and peaceful delight in which every one of his countrymen could partake. In the sentiments of America he seems to have lost his own; and at the great moral crisis of his history, when the final triumph was achieved, he unconsciously placed himself in a station of solitary pre-eminence above all the heroes of ancient or modern times. Hitherto, he had only conquered armies; but now he laid all the passions of nature vanquished at his feet. Cæsar is said to have assentingly refused a crown; but no man dared to offer it to Washington. Alexander mourned that another world was not left for his conquests; but Washington "saw and conquered" the more impregnable world which nature has created within the bosom of mankind.

In the more recent pages of history we have the example of a man, who, early imbued with the spirit of liberty, directed the movements of an agitated nation, and swept away the corrupt remains of a tyrannical dynasty. Cromwell was indeed an illustrious warrior and an extraordinary statesman. Under his auspices England rose to an almost unexampled greatness; and the revolution which he conducted gave the first shock to political tyranny. Yet the mind of Cromwell was not sufficiently strong to stand against the intoxicating effects of sovereign rule, and to direct a nation to the attainment of rational liberty. The monarch

whom he had sacrificed was never guilty of a blacker treason against the majesty of the people than was committed by the man who styled himself their Protector, when he trampled their rights in the dust by expelling their representatives from their chamber.

The example of Buonaparte is in many respects similar. He too started in his strange career under the pretence of advocating the rights of mankind, but in the midst of it he hung the spoils of an ancient nobility upon the shoulders of popular demagogues, and at length seated himself an emperor in the throne of a murdered king. It was left by Providence to Washington to show that the principles of civil and religious liberty are not necessarily associated with selfishness and rapine. Amidst the admiring gaze of the civilised world, and with an army and a nation alike devoted to his interest, he suddenly disappeared from his lofty station, and was found in domestic privacy converting the weapons of war into implements of husbandry, and awaiting the call of his country to come forth to a fresh vindication of her liberties.

Another cardinal distinction of General Washington was his decision of character: he was indeed slow to form his resolutions, but he was far slower to relinquish or to change them. It could not, indeed, be certain that he would accomplish the designs upon which he had resolved; but it was as certain as a law of nature could have made it, that no means which could tend to their success would be left unemployed. It was this commanding quality which gave to his character its uniform consistency. It seemed to brace together into union all the faculties of his soul, and to concentrate their

continued activity upon the great designs which he conceived. Still it must be acknowledged that there was associated with this a want of that tenderness and susceptibility, which is essential to a perfect moral character. For this it is not difficult to account. The appointments of Providence denied him those endearing relationships which are found to exercise and mature the warmest sympathies of the soul. By the public engagements in which his life was occupied, he was even debarred in a great measure from those domestic endearments which have so powerful a tendency to humanise and to soften. His mind had no leisure for minor interests, and but few opportunities for the performance of the little offices and attentions of friendship. To this may be added the influence of military command, than which nothing is more calculated to impart to the mind a character of rigour and austerity. And here it would be improper to omit some notice of that one spot on the refulgent disc of his virtues, which nothing can ever purge away. It is indeed a most affecting reflection, that the great liberator of his country was himself the possessor of slaves. The fact seems to constitute a species of mystery in his character. It was inconsistent alike with his political notions and his private and instinctive sentiments; and it remains upon the records of his life as if it were designed to suggest the salutary consideration that human nature is a strange mixture of incongruities and contradictions, and that "man at his best estate is altogether vanity."

An attentive observation, however, will convince us that this great moral error was entirely isolated in his character, and unproductive of cor-

responding results. It seemed, as it were, to create no disturbance in the economy of his mind, and to assume not so much the character of a disease as of one of those deformities which destroy the perfection of symmetry without interfering with the functions of health.

The military talents of General Washington were of the highest order. Whether we regard his knowledge of the science of war, the judgment with which he selected his positions and disposed his army, the perfect temper with which he reserved his resources for the crisis at which they could be successfully exerted; or whether we consider the difficulties which he had to encounter from the constant fluctuations and consequent inefficiency of his troops, and the rare talent which he evinced in perpetuating discipline amidst a raw and untrained soldiery, we must concede to him a high place among the military commanders of modern times.

As a statesman, he was comprehensive in his views, and upright and consistent in his conduct; and if it is lawful to estimate his greatness, in this respect, by the unparalleled difficulties which he overcame, and the brilliant results which he achieved, it is not easy to find his equal in the pages of universal history. Many, indeed, have surpassed him in cunning, many in the power of their eloquence, and many have signalised their administration by greater territorial aggrandisement; but in the combination of all those qualities which are adapted at once to establish the liberty and controul the licentiousness of nations, to perpetuate their prosperity, and to elevate their character, he stands without a rival. In all the measures which he intro-

duced, he appeared before the senate with every motive and design unveiled; and, disdaining all the arts of the partisan, he only depended for the support of his country upon the integrity of his character, and the wisdom of his counsels.

It would be worse than superfluous to insist on his love of liberty, though even in this respect his exemplary moderation, and his horror of that anarchy which, in France, had usurped the name of freedom, laid him open to much suspicion. With respect to his political opinions in the latter part of his life, at which time, alone, they were suspected, it will be interesting to listen to the testimony of his friend, Mr. Jefferson.—

"I am satisfied," says he, after a warm eulogium upon his character, "that the great body of republicans think of him as I do: we were, indeed, dissatisfied with him on his ratification of the British treaty; but this was short-lived. We knew his honesty—the wiles by which he was encompassed, and that age had already begun to relax the firmness of his purposes; and I am convinced he is more deeply seated in the love and gratitude of the republicans, than in the pharisaical homage of the federal monarchists. For he was no monarchist from the preference of his judgment. The soundness of that gave him correct views of the rights of man, and his severe justice devoted him to them. He has often declared to me that he considered our new constitution as an experiment upon the practicability of republican government, and with what dose of liberty man could be trusted for his own good: that he was determined the experiment should have a fair trial, and would lose the last drop of his blood in support of it."

Such was General Washington. He left behind him no children, as if it were the will of Providence that he should bequeath his name to none who could not also wear the mantle of his excellence; but that name is perpetuated by some town or village in every county of every American state:—nay, on every acre of the New World, the man who seeks the hero's monument, has but to look around him. The whole country is the vast and ever exaggerating tradition of Washington, and the only adequate expression of his greatness—recording to the latest generations of mankind, a name enduring as her everlasting hills, and a fame as boundless as her mighty waters.

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS OF GEN. WASHINGTON

TO

THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES, ON HIS FINAL RESIGNATION OF THE PRESIDENCY.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS,

The period for a new election of a citizen, to administer the Executive Government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that, in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in

my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been an uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety; and am persuaded whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have, with good intentions, contributed, towards the organisation and administration of the government, the best exertions of

which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied, that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country, for the many honours it has conferred upon me; still more for the stedfast confidence with which it has supported me, and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious—vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging—in situations, in which, not unfrequently, want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism—the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were

effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows, that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence—that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual—that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained—that its administration, in every department, may be stamped with wisdom and virtue—that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these states, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation, and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and the adoption, of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop; but a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsels. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommen-

dation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But, as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress, against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively, though often covertly and insidiously, directed; it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union, to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immoveable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it, as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can, in any event, be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of

American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The *North*, in an unrestrained intercourse with the *South*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *South*, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the *North*, sees its agriculture grow, and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted.

The *East*, in like intercourse with the *West*, already finds, and in the progressive improve-

ment of interior communication by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the *secure* enjoyment of indispensable *outlets*, for its own productions, to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as *one nation*. Any other tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connexion with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts, greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations, and, what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighbouring countries not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues, would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which, under any form of government,

are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is that your union ought to be considered as the main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorised to hope that a proper organisation of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those, who, in any quarter, may endeavour to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our union, it occurs as a matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterising parties by geographical discriminations, *Northern* and *Southern*, *Atlantic* and *Western*; whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot

shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head: they have seen in the negociation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them, of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic states, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi: they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the union, by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parties, can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for

the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitution of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, controul, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organise faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force, to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small, but artful and enterprising, minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of con-

sistent and wholesome plans, digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above description, may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious and unprincipled men, will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying, afterwards, the very engines which had lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist, with care, the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretext. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of government, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard, by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion: and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigour as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty, is

indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you, the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists, under different shapes, in all governments; more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism: but this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and, sooner or later, the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the

purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it. It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one party against another, foments, occasionally, riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself, through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This, within certain limits, is probably true, and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favour, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose; and there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important likewise, that the habits of thinking, in a free country, should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever be the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominate in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment, in the way which the constitution designates: but let there be no change by usurpation; though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man

claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it, is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also, that timely disburse-

ments to prepare for danger, frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it: avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned; not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it; and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue, which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations, cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be, that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and (at no distant period) a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which

might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others should be excluded; and that in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another, disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur.

Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts, through passion, what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility, instigated by pride, ambition and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils.

Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favourite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld: and it gives to ambitious, corrupted or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favourite nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly*

awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connexion as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the

neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humour or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronising infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, and a liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying, by gentle means, the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; estab-

lishing, with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favours from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

"In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will controul the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations: but if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur, to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare by which they have been dictated

How far, in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22nd of April, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me; uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary, on this occasion, to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption, to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though, in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects, not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation, that retreat, in which I promise myself to realise, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.

GENERAL WASHINGTON'S WILL.

In the name of God, Amen.

I, GEORGE WASHINGTON, of Mount Vernon, a citizen of the United States, and lately President of the same, do make, ordain and declare this instrument, which is written with my own hand *, and every page thereof subscribed with my Name, to be my last WILL and TESTAMENT, revoking all others.—*Imprimis.* All my debts, of which there are but few, and none of magnitude, are to be punctually and speedily paid, and the legacies hereinafter bequeathed, are to be discharged as soon as circumstances will permit, and in the manner directed.

Item.—To my dearly beloved wife Martha Washington, I give and bequeath the use, profit and benefit of my whole estate, real and personal, for the term of her natural life, except such parts thereof as are specially disposed of hereafter. My improved lot, in the town of Alexandria, situated on Pitt and Cameron streets, I give to her and her heirs for ever; as I also do my household and kitchen furniture, of every sort and kind, with the

* In the original manuscript, George Washington's name was written at the bottom of every page.

liquors and groceries which may be on hand at the time of my decease, to be used and disposed of as she may think proper.

Item.—Upon the decease of my wife, it is my will and desire that all the Slaves which I hold in my own right shall receive their freedom. To emancipate them during her life, would, though earnestly wished by me, be attended with such insuperable difficulties, on account of their intermixture by marriage with the dower negroes, as to excite the most painful sensations, if not disagreeable consequences from the latter, while both descriptions are in the occupancy of the same proprietor; it not being in my power, under the tenure by which the dower negroes are held, to manumit them. And whereas, among those who will receive freedom according to this devise, there may be some, who from old age or bodily infirmities, and others, who on account of their infancy, that will be unable to support themselves, it is my will and desire, that all who come under the first and second description, shall be comfortably clothed and fed by my heirs while they live; and that such of the latter description as have no parents living, or if living, are unable or unwilling to provide for them, shall be bound by the court until they shall arrive at the age of twenty-five years; and in cases where no record can be produced, whereby their ages can be ascertained, the judgment of the court, upon its own view of the subject, shall be adequate and final. The negroes thus bound, are (by their masters or mistresses) to be taught to read and write, and to be brought up to some useful occupation, agreeably to the laws of the commonwealth of

Virginia, providing for the support of orphan and other poor children. And I do hereby expressly forbid the sale or transportation, out of the said commonwealth, of any Slave I may die possessed of, under any pretence whatsoever. And I do moreover, most pointedly and most solemnly enjoin it upon my Executors hereafter named, or the survivor of them, to see that this clause respecting Slaves, and every part thereof, be religiously fulfilled at the epoch at which it is directed to take place, without evasion, neglect, or delay, after the crops which may then be on the ground are harvested, particularly as it respects the aged and infirm; seeing that a regular and permanent fund be established for their support, as long as there are subjects requiring it; not trusting to the uncertain provision to be made by individuals. And to my Mulatto man, William, calling himself William Lee, I give immediate freedom, or if he should prefer it, (on account of the accidents which have befallen him, and which have rendered him incapable of walking, or of any active employment) to remain in the situation he now is, it shall be optional in him to do so; in either case, however, I allow him an annuity of thirty dollars, during his natural life, which shall be independent of the victuals and clothes he has been accustomed to receive, if he choose the last alternative; but in full with his freedom, if he prefers the first; and this I give him, as a testimony of my sense of his attachment to me, and for his faithful services during the revolutionary war.

Item.—To the trustees (governors, or by whatsoever other name they may be designated) of the academy, in the town of Alexandria, I give

and bequeath, in trust, four thousand dollars, or in other words, twenty of the shares which I hold in the bank of Alexandria, towards the support of a Free School, established at, and annexed to, the said Academy, for the purpose of educating such orphan children, or the children of such other poor and indigent persons, as are unable to accomplish it with their own means; and who, in the judgment of the trustees of the said seminary, are best entitled to the benefit of this donation. The aforesaid twenty shares I give and bequeath in perpetuity; the dividends only of which are to be drawn for, and applied by the said trustees, for the time being, for the uses abovementioned; the stock to remain entire and untouched, unless indications of failure of the said bank should be apparent, or a discontinuance thereof should render a removal of this fund necessary. In either of these cases, the amount of the stock here devised is to be vested in some other bank, or public institution, whereby the interest may with regularity and certainty be drawn and applied as above: and, to prevent misconception, my meaning is, and is hereby declared to be, that these twenty shares are in lieu of, and not in addition to, the thousand pounds given by a missive letter some years ago; in consequence whereof, an annuity of fifty pounds has since been paid towards the support of this institution.

Item.—Whereas by a law of the commonwealth of Virginia, enacted in the year 1785, the Legislature thereof was pleased, as an evidence of its approbation of the services I had rendered the public during the revolution, and partly, I believe, in consideration of my having suggested the vast

advantages which the community would derive from the extension of its inland navigation under Legislative patronage, to present me with one hundred shares, of one hundred dollars each, in the incorporated company, established for the purpose of extending the navigation of James's River, from the tide water to the mountains; and also with fifty shares of 100*l.* sterling each, in the corporation of another company likewise established for the similar purpose of opening the navigation of the river Potowmack, from the tide water to Fort Cumberland; the acceptance of which, although the offer was highly honourable and grateful to my feelings, was refused, as inconsistent with a principle which I had adopted, and had never departed from, viz. not to receive pecuniary compensation for any services I could render my country in its arduous struggle with Great Britain for its rights; and because I had evaded similar propositions from other states in the union. Adding to this refusal, however, an intimation that, if it should be the pleasure of the legislature, to permit me to appropriate the said shares to *public uses*, I would receive them on those terms with due sensibility; and this it having consented to, in flattering terms, as will appear by a subsequent law, and sundry resolutions, in the most ample and honourable manner, I proceed, after this recital, for the more correct understanding of the case, to declare—That as it has always been a source of serious regret with me, to see the youth of these United States sent to foreign countries for the purpose of education, often before their minds were formed, or they had imbibed any adequate ideas of the happiness of

their own; contracting too frequently, not only habits of dissipation and extravagance, but principles unfriendly to republican government, and to the true and genuine liberties of mankind; which thereafter are rarely overcome. For these reasons it has been my ardent wish, to see a plan devised on a liberal scale, which would have a tendency to spread systematic ideas through all parts of this rising empire, thereby to do away local attachments and state prejudices, as far as the nature of things would, or indeed ought to admit, from our National Councils. Looking anxiously forward to the accomplishment of so desirable an object as this is (in my estimation) my mind has not been able to contemplate any plan more likely to effect the measures than the establishment of an University in a central part of the United States, to which the youths of fortune and talents from all parts thereof, may be sent for the completion of their education, in all the branches of polite literature; in arts and sciences, in acquiring knowledge in the principles of politics and good government, and, (as a matter of infinite importance in my judgment) by associating with each other, and forming friendships in juvenile years, be enabled to free themselves, in a proper degree, from those local prejudices and habitual jealousies which have just been mentioned; and which, when carried to excess, are never-failing sources of disquietude to the public mind, and pregnant of mischievous consequences to this country, under these impressions, so fully dilated.

Item.—I give and bequeath in perpetuity, the fifty shares which I hold in the Potowmack company (under the aforesaid acts of the Legislature

of Virginia) towards the endowment of an University, to be established within the limits of the district of Columbia, under the auspices of the general government, if that government should incline to extend a fostering hand towards it; and until such seminary is established, and the funds arising on these shares shall be required for its support, my further will and desire is that the profit accruing therefrom, shall, whenever the dividends are made, be laid out in purchasing stock in the bank of Columbia, or some other bank, at the discretion of my executors, or by the treasurer of the United States for the time being, under the direction of Congress, provided that honourable body should patronise the measure; and the dividends proceeding from the purchase of such stock, are to be vested in more stock, and so on, until a sum, adequate to the accomplishment of the object is obtained; of which I have not the smallest doubt before many years pass away, even if no aid or encouragement is given by the legislative authority, or from any other source.

Item.—The hundred shares which I hold in James River Company, I have given, and now confirm in perpetuity, to and for the use and benefit of Liberty Hall Academy, in the county of Rockbridge, in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Item.—I release, exonerate and discharge the estate of my deceased brother Samuel Washington, from the payment of the money which is due to me for the land I sold to Philip Pendleton (lying in the county of Berkley) who assigned the same to him, the said Samuel, who by agreement, was to pay me therefor; And whereas, by

some contract, (the purport of which was never communicated to me) between the said Samuel and his son, Thornton Washington, the latter became possessed of the aforesaid land, without any conveyance having passed from me, either to the said Pendleton, the said Samuel, or the said Thornton, and without any consideration having been made, by which neglect neither the legal nor equitable title has been alienated; it rests therefore with me to declare my intentions concerning the premises; and these are to give and bequeath the said land to whomsoever the said Thornton Washington (who is also dead) devised the same, or to his heirs for ever, if he died intestate, exonerating the estate of the said Thornton, equally with that of the said Samuel, from payment of the purchase money, which, with interest, agreeably to the original contract with the said Pendleton, would amount to more than a thousand pounds: And whereas, two other sons of my said deceased brother Samuel, namely, George Steptoe Washington, and Lawrence Augustine Washington, were, by the decease of those to whose care they were committed, brought under my protection, and in consequence, have occasioned advances on my part, for their education at college, and other schools, for their board, clothing, and other incidental expenses, to the amount of near five thousand dollars, over and above the sums furnished by their estates, which sum it may be inconvenient for them or their father's estate to refund—I do for these reasons acquit them and the said estate from the payment thereof—my intention being that all accounts between them and me, and their father's estate and me, shall stand balanced.

Item.—The balance due to me from the estate of Bartholomew Dandridge, deceased, (my wife's brother) and which amounted on the first day of October, 1795, to four hundred and twenty-five pounds, (as will appear by an account rendered by his deceased son John Dandridge, who was the acting executor of his father's will), I release and acquit from the payment thereof—and the negroes (then thirty-three in number, formerly belonging to the said estate, who were taken in execution, sold and purchased in on my account, in the year (blank) and ever since have remained in the possession, and to the use of Mary, widow of the said Bartholomew Dandridge, with their increase, it is my will and desire shall continue and be in her possession, without paying hire, or making compensation for the same, for the time past or to come, during her natural life; at the expiration of which, I direct that all of them who are forty years old and upwards shall receive their freedom; and all under that age, and above sixteen, shall serve seven years and no longer; and all under sixteen years shall serve until they are twenty five years of age, and then be free—and to avoid disputes respecting the ages of any of these negroes, they are to be taken into the court of the county in which they reside, and the judgment thereof, in this relation, shall be final, and record thereof made, which may be adduced as evidence at any time thereafter, if disputes should arise concerning the same.—And I further direct that the heirs of the said Bartholomew Dandridge shall equally share the benefits arising from the services of the said negroes, according to the tenor of this devise, upon the decease of their mother.

Item.—If Charles Carter, who intermarried

with my niece, Betty Lewis, is not sufficiently secured in the title to the lots he had of me in the town of Fredericksburg, it is my will and desire that my Executors shall make such conveyances of them as the law requires to render it perfect.

Item.—To my nephew, William Augustine Washington, and his heirs (if he should conceive them to be objects worth prosecuting) a lot in the town of Manchester (opposite to Richmond) No. 265, drawn on my sole account, and also the tenth of one or two hundred acre lots, and two or three half acre lots, in the city and vicinity of Richmond, drawn in partnership with nine others, all in the lottery of the deceased William Byrd, are given; as is also a lot which I purchased of John Hood, conveyed by William Willie and Samuel Gordon, trustees of the said John Hood, numbered 139, in the town of Edinburgh, in the county of Prince George, State of Virginia.

Item.—To my nephew, Bushrod Washington, I give and bequeath all the papers in my possession, which relate to my civil and military administration of the affairs of this county.—I leave to him also, such of my private papers as are worth preserving; and at the decease of my wife, and before, if she is not inclined to retain them, I give and bequeath my library of books and pamphlets of every kind.

Item.—Having sold lands which I possessed in the State of Pennsylvania, and part of a tract held in equal right with George Clinton, late Governor of Newyork, in the State of Newyork, my share of land and interest in the Great Dismal Swamp, and a tract of land which I owned in the County of Gloucester—withholding the legal titles thereto,

until the consideration money should be paid—and having moreover leased and conditionally sold (as will appear by the tenor of the said leases) all my lands upon the Great Kenhawa, and a tract upon Difficult Run, in the county of Loudoun, it is my will and direction, that whensoever the contracts are fully and respectively complied with, according to the spirit, true intent and meaning thereof, on the part of the purchasers, their heirs or assigns, that then, and in that case, conveyances are to be made, agreeable to the terms of the said contracts, and the money arising therefrom, when paid, to be vested in bank stock; the dividends whereof, as of that also which is already vested therein, is to inure to my sad wife during her life, but the stock itself is to remain and be subject to the general distribution hereafter directed.

Item.—To the Earl of Buchan I recommit the "box made of the oak that sheltered the great Sir William Wallace, after the battle of Falkirk," presented to me by his Lordship in terms too flattering for me to repeat, with a request "to pass it, on the event of my decease, to the man in my country, who should appear to merit it best, upon the same conditions that have induced him to send it to me." Whether easy or not to select the man who might comport with his Lordship's opinion in this respect, is not for me to say; but conceiving that no disposition of this valuable curiosity can be more eligible than the recommitment of it to his own cabinet, agreeably to the original design of the Goldsmiths Company of Edinburgh, who presented it tohim, and at his request, consented that it should be transferred to me—I do give and bequeath the same to his Lordship: and in case of

his decease, to his heir, with my grateful thanks for the distinguished honour of presenting it to me, and more especially for the favourable sentiments with which he accompanied it.

Item.—To my brother Charles Washington, I give and bequeath the gold-headed cane, left me by Dr. Franklin in his will. I add nothing to it, because of the ample provision I have made for his issue. To the acquaintances and friends of my juvenile years, Lawrence Washington and Robert Washington, of Chotanck, I give my other two gold-headed canes, having my arms engraved on them; and to each, as they will be useful where they live, I leave one of the spy-glasses, which constituted part of my equipage during the late war. To my compatriot in arms, and old and intimate friend Dr. Craik, I give my bureau, (or, as the cabinet-makers call it, tambour secretary) and the circular chair, an appendage of my study. To Dr. David Stuart, I give my large shaving and dressing table, and my telescope. To the Rev., now Bryan, Lord Fairfax, I give a Bible, in three large folio volumes, with notes, presented to me by the Rt. Rev. T. Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man. To General De La Fayette, I give a pair of finely-wrought steel pistols, taken from the enemy in the revolutionary war. To my sisters-in-law Hannah Washington and Mildred Washington—to my friends Eleanor Stuart, Hannah Washington, of Fairfield, and Elizabeth Washington, of Hayfield, I give each a mourning ring, of the value of one hundred dollars. These bequests are not made for the intrinsic value of them, but as mementos of my esteem and regard. To Tobias Lear, I give the use of the farm

which he now holds, in virtue of a lease from me to him and his deceased wife, (for and during their natural lives) free from rent during his life; at the expiration of which, it is to be disposed of as is hereinafter directed. To Sally B. Haynie, (a distant relation of mine) I give and bequeath three hundred dollars. To Sarah Green, daughter of the deceased Tho. Bishop, and to Ann Walker, daughter of John Alton, also deceased, I give each one hundred dollars, in consideration of the attachment of their fathers to me; each of whom having lived nearly forty years in my family. To each of my nephews, William Augustine Washington, George Lewis, George Steptoe Washington, Bushrod Washington, and Samuel Washington, I give one of the swords, or cutteaux, of which I may die possessed; and they are to choose in the order they are named.—These swords are accompanied with an injunction not to unsheath them for the purpose of shedding blood, except it be for self defence, or in defence of their country and its rights; and in the latter case, to keep them unsheathed, and prefer falling with them in their hands to the relinquishment thereof.

And now, having gone through these specific devises, with explanations for the more correct understanding of the meaning and design of them, I proceed to the distribution of the more important parts of my estate, in manner following:

First. To my nephew, Bushrod Washington, and his heirs, partly in consideration of an intimation to his deceased father, while we were bachelors, and he had kindly undertaken to superintend my estate during my military services, in the former war between Great Britain and France, that if I

should fall therein, Mount Vernon (then less extensive in domain than at present, should become his property), I give and bequeath all that part thereof which is comprehended within the following limits, viz. beginning at the ford of Dogue Run, near my mill, and extending along the road, and bounded thereby, as it now goes, and ever has gone, since my recollection of it, to the ford of Little Hunting Creek, at the Gum Spring, until it comes to a knoll, opposite to an old road which formerly passed through the lower field of Muddy Hole Farm; at which, on the north side of the said road, are three red or Spanish oaks, marked as a corner, and a stone placed—thence by a line of trees, to be marked rectangular, to the back line or outer boundary of the tract between Thompson Mason and myself—thence with that line easterly (now double ditching, with a post and rail fence thereon) to the run of Little Hunting Creek—thence with the run, which is the boundary between the lands of the late Humphrey Peake and me, to the tide water of the said Creek—thence by that water to Potowmack River—thence with the river to the mouth of Dogue Creek—and thence with the said Dogue Creek to the place of beginning at the aforesaid ford, containing upwards of four thousand acres, be the same more or less, together with the mansion house, and all other buildings and improvements thereon. Second, in consideration of the consanguinity between them and my wife, being as nearly related to her as myself; as, on account of the affection I had for, and the obligation I was under to, their father when living, who from his youth had attached himself to my person, and followed my fortunes through the vicissitudes of the

late revolution, afterwards devoting his time to the superintendence of my private concerns for many years, whilst my public employments rendered it impracticable for me to do it myself, thereby affording me essential services, and always performing them in a manner the most filial and respectful: for these reasons, I say, I give and bequeath to George Fayette Washington, and Lawrence Augustine Washington, and their heirs, my estate east of Little Hunting Creek, lying on the river Potowmack, including the farm of three hundred and sixty acres, leased to Tobias Lear, as noticed before, and containing in the whole, by deed, two thousand and twenty-seven acres, be it more or less; which said estate, it is my will and desire should be equitably and advantageously divided between them, according to quantity, quality, and other circumstances, when the youngest shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years, by three judicious and disinterested men; one to be chosen by each of the brothers, and the third by these two. In the mean time, if the termination of my wife's interest therein should have ceased, the profits arising therefrom are to be applied for their joint uses and benefit. Third. And whereas it has always been my intention, since my expectation of having issue has ceased, to consider the grandchildren of my wife in the same light as I do my own relations, and to act a friendly part by them, more especially by the two whom we have raised from their earliest infancy, namely, Eleanor Park Custis, and George Washington Park Custis; and whereas the former of these hath lately intermarried with Lawrence Lewis, a son of my deceased sister, Betty Lewis, by which union the inducement

to provide for them both has been increased. Wherefore, I give and bequeath to the said Lawrence Lewis, and Eleanor Park Lewis, his wife, and their heirs, the residue of my Mount Vernon Estate, not already devised to my nephew, Bushrod Washington, comprehended within the following description, viz. all the land north of the road leading from the ford of Dogue Run to the Gum Spring, as described in the devise of the other part of the tract, to Bushrod Washington, until it comes to the stone and three red or Spanish oaks on the knoll, thence with the rectangular line to the back line (between Mr. Mason and me), thence with that line westerly along the new double ditch to Dogue Run, by the tumbling dam of my mill; thence with the said run to the ford aforementioned. To which I add all the land I possess west of the said Dogue Run and Dogue Creek, bounded easterly and southerly thereby, together with the mill, distillery, and all other houses and improvements on the premises, making together about two thousand acres, be it more or less. Fourth. Actuated by the principle already mentioned, I give and bequeath to George Washington Park Custis, the grandson of my wife, and my ward, and to his heirs, the tract I hold on Four Mile Run, in the vicinity of Alexandria, containing one thousand two hundred acres, more or less, and my entire square, No. 21, in the city of Washington. Fifth. All the rest and residue of my estate, real and personal, not disposed of in manner aforesaid, in whatsoever consisting, wheresoever lying, and whensoever found, a schedule of which, as far as is recollected, with a reasonable estimate of its value, is hereunto annexed, I desire

may be sold by my executors, at such times, in such manner, and on such credits (if an equal, valid, and satisfactory distribution of the specific property cannot be made without) as in their judgment shall be most conducive to the interest of the parties concerned, and the moneys arising therefrom to be divided into twenty-three equal parts, and applied as follows, viz. to William Augustine Washington, Elizabeth Spotswood, Jane Thornton, and the heirs of Ann Ashton, sons and daughters of my deceased brother, Augustine Washington, I give and bequeath four parts; that is, one part to each of them. To Fielding Lewis, George Lewis, Robert Lewis, Howell Lewis, and Betty Carter, sons and daughters of my deceased sister, Betty Lewis, I give and bequeath five other parts, one to each of them. To George Steptoe Washington, Lawrence Augustine Washington, Harriott Parks, and the heirs of Thornton Washington, sons and daughters of my deceased brother, Samuel Washington, I give and bequeath other four parts, one to each of them. To Corbin Washington, and the heirs of Jane Washington, son and daughter of my deceased brother, John Augustine Washington, I give and bequeath two parts, one to each of them. To Samuel Washington, Frances Ball, and Mildred Hammond, son and daughters of my brother, Charles Washington, I give and bequeath three parts, one part to each of them. And to George Fayette Washington, Charles Augustine Washington, and Maria Washington, sons and daughter of my deceased nephew, George Augustine Washington, I give one other part, that is, to each a third of that part. To Elizabeth Park Law,

Martha Park Peters, and Eleanor Park Lewis, I give and bequeath three other parts, that is, a part to each of them. And to my nephews, Bushrod Washington and Lawrence Lewis, and to my ward, the grandson of my wife, I give and bequeath one other part, that is, a third thereof to each of them. And if it should so happen, that any of the persons whose names are here enumerated (unknown to me) should now be dead, or should die before me, that in either of these cases, the heirs of such deceased person shall, notwithstanding, derive all the benefits of the bequest in the same manner as if he or she was actually living at the time. And by way of advice, I recommend it to my executors not to be precipitate of disposing of the landed property (herein directed to be sold), if from temporary causes the sale should be dull, experience having fully evinced, that the price of land (especially above the falls of the river, and on the western waters) has been progressively rising, and cannot be long checked in its increasing value. And I particularly recommend it to such of the legatees (under this clause of my will) as can make it convenient, to take each a share of my stock in the Potowmack Company, in preference to the amount of what it might sell for; being thoroughly convinced myself, that no uses to which the money can be applied will be so productive as the tolls arising from this navigation when in full operation, and thus, from the nature of things, it must be ere long, and more especially if that of the Shenandoah is added thereto.

The family vault at Mount Vernon requiring repairs, and being improperly situated besides, I

desire, that a new one of brick, and upon a larger scale, may be built at the foot of what is commonly called the Vineyard Inclosure, on the ground which is marked out; in which my remains, with those of my deceased relations, now in the old vault, and such others of my family as may choose to be entombed there, may be deposited. And it is my express desire, that my corpse may be interred in a private manner, without parade or funeral oration.

Lastly, I constitute and appoint my dearly beloved wife, Martha Washington, my nephew William Augustine Washington, Bushrod Washington, George Steptoe Washington, Samuel Washington, and Lawrence Lewis, and my ward, George Washington Park Custis, when he shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years, executrix and executors of this will and testament: in the construction of which it will be readily perceived that no professional character has been consulted, or has had any agency in the draught; and that although it has occupied many of my leisure hours to digest, and to throw it into its present form, it may, notwithstanding, appear crude and incorrect; but, having endeavoured to be plain and explicit in all the devises, even at the expense of prolixity, perhaps of tautology, I hope and trust that no disputes will arise concerning them. But if, contrary to expectation, the case should be otherwise, from want of legal expressions, or the usual technical terms, or because too much or too little has been said on any of the devises to be consonant with law, my will and direction expressly is, that all disputes, (if unhappily any should arise) shall be decided by three impartial and intelligent men,

known for their probity and good understanding; two to be chosen by the disputants, each having the choice of one, and the third by those two, which three men, thus chosen, shall, unfettered by law, or legal constructions, declare their sense of the testator's intention; and such decision is, to all intents and purposes, to be as binding on the parties as if it had been given in the supreme court of the United States.

In witness of all, and in each of the things herein contained, I have set my hand and seal, this ninth day of July, in the year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety*, and the Independence of the United States the Twenty-fourth.

GEORGE WASHINGTON. (L.S.)

* It appears the word "*Nine*" was omitted by the testator.

DESCRIPTION OF MOUNT VERNON,

AND OF THE

DOMESTIC HABITS OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

(From Weld's Travels in the United States.)

NINE miles below this place (*i. e.* Alexandria), on the banks of the Potowmac, stands Mount Vernon, the seat of General Washington; the way to it, however, from Alexandria, by land, is considerably farther, on account of the numerous creeks which fall into the Potowmac, and the mouths of which it is impossible to pass near to.

Very thick woods remain standing within four or five miles of the place; the roads through them are very bad, and so many of them cross one another in different directions, that it is a matter of very great difficulty to find out the right one. I set out from Alexandria with a gentleman who thought himself perfectly well acquainted with the way; had he been so, there was ample time to have reached Mount Vernon before the close of the day, but night overtook us wandering about in the woods. We did not perceive the vestige of a human being to set us right, and we were preparing to pass the night in the carriage, when luckily a light appeared at some distance through the trees; it was from a

small farm-house, the only one in the way for several miles; and having made our way to it, partly in the carriage, partly on foot, we hired a negro for a guide, who conducted us to the place of our destination in about an hour. The next morning I heard of a gentleman, who, a day or two preceding, had been from ten o'clock in the morning till four in the afternoon on horseback, unable to find out the place, although within three or four miles of it the whole time.

The Mount is a high part of the bank of the river, which rises very abruptly about two hundred feet above the level of the water. The river before it is three miles wide, and on the opposite side it forms a bay about the same breadth, which extends for a considerable distance up the country. This, at first sight, appears to be a continuation of the river; but the Potowmac takes a very sudden turn to the left, two or three miles above the house, and is quickly lost to the view. Downwards, to the right, there is a prospect of it for twelve miles. The Maryland shore, on the opposite side, is beautifully diversified with hills, which are mostly covered with wood; in many places, however, little patches of cultivated ground appear, ornamented with houses. The scenery altogether is most delightful. The house, which stands about sixty yards from the edge of the Mount, is of wood, cut and painted so as to resemble hewn stone. The rear is towards the river, at which side is a portico of ninety-six feet in length, supported by eight pillars. The front is uniform, and at a distance looks tolerably well. The dwelling house is in the centre, and communicates with the wings on either side, by means of covered ways, running in a curved direction. Behind these wings,

on the one side, are the different offices belonging to the house, and also to the farm; and on the other, the cabins for the slaves. In front, the breadth of the whole building, is a lawn with a gravel walk round it, planted with trees, and separated by hedges on either side from the farm-yard and garden. As for the garden, it wears exactly the appearance of a nursery, and with every thing about the place, indicates that more attention is paid to profit than to pleasure. The ground in the rear of the house is also laid out in a lawn, and the declivity of the Mount, towards the water, in a deer park.

The rooms in the house are very small, excepting one, which has been built since the close of the war for the purpose of entertainments. All of these are very plainly furnished, and in many of them the furniture is dropping to pieces. Indeed, the close attention which General Washington has ever paid to public affairs having obliged him to reside principally at Philadelphia, Mount Vernon has consequently suffered very materially. The house and offices, with every other part of the place, are out of repair, and the old part of the building is in such a perishable state, that I have been told he wishes he had pulled it entirely down at first, and built a new house, instead of making any addition to the old one. The grounds in the neighbourhood are cultivated, but the principal farms are at the distance of two or three miles.

As almost every stranger going through the country makes a point of visiting Mount Vernon, a person is kept at the house during General Washington's absence, whose sole business it is to attend to strangers. Immediately on our arrival

every care was taken of our horses, beds were prepared, and an excellent supper provided for us, with claret and other wine, &c.

The following is the Traveller's account of the General, as he appeared at the time of the celebration of his birth-day.

Philadelphia now wears a very different aspect to what it did when I landed there in the month of November. Both Congress and the State Assembly are sitting, as well as the Supreme Federal Court. The city is full of strangers; the theatres are open; and a variety of public and private amusements are going forward. On General Washington's birth-day, which was a few days ago, this city was unusually gay; every person of consequence in it, quakers alone excepted, made it a point to visit the general on this day. As early as eleven o'clock in the morning he was prepared to receive them, and the audience lasted till three in the afternoon. The society of the Cincinnati, the clergy, the officers of the militia, and several others, who formed a distinct body of citizens, came by themselves separately. The foreign ministers attended in their richest dresses and most splendid equipages. Two large parlours were open for the reception of the gentlemen, the windows of one of which towards the street, were crowded with spectators on the outside. The sideboard was furnished with cake and wines, whereof the visiters partook. I never observed so much cheerfulness before in the countenance of General Washington; but it was impossible for him to remain insensible to the attention and the compliments paid to him on this occasion.

The ladies of the city, equally attentive, paid their respects to Mrs. Washington, who received them in the drawing-room up stairs. After having visited the general, most of the gentlemen also waited upon her. A public ball and supper terminated the rejoicings of the day.

On this day, General Washington terminated his sixty-fourth year; but though not an unhealthy man, he seemed considerably older. The innumerable vexations he has met with in his different public capacities have very sensibly impaired the vigour of his constitution, and given him an aged appearance. There is a very material difference, however, in his looks when seen in private and when he appears in public full dressed; in the latter case the hand of art makes up for the ravages of time, and he seems many years younger.

Few persons find themselves for the first time in the presence of General Washington, a man so renowned in the present day for his wisdom and moderation, and whose name will be transmitted with such honour to posterity, without being impressed with a certain degree of veneration and awe; nor do these emotions subside on a closer acquaintance; on the contrary, his person and deportment are such as rather tend to augment them. There is something very austere in his countenance, and in his manners he is uncommonly reserved. I have heard some officers, that served immediately under his command during the American war, say, that they never saw him smile during all the time that they were with him. No man has ever yet been connected with him by the reciprocal and unconstrained ties of friendship;

and but a few can boast even of having been on an easy and familiar footing with him.

The height of his person is about five feet eleven; his chest is full; and his limbs, though rather slender, well shaped and muscular. His head is small, in which respect he resembles the make of a great number of his countrymen. His eyes are of a light grey colour; and, in proportion to the length of his face, his nose is long. Mr. Stewart, the eminent portrait painter, told me, that there are features in his face totally different from what he ever observed in that of any other human being; the sockets for the eyes, for instance, are larger than what he ever met with before, and the upper part of the nose broader. All his features, he observed, were indicative of the strongest and most ungovernable passions; and had he been born in the forests, it was his opinion that he would have been the fiercest man amongst the savage tribes. In this Mr. Stewart has given a proof of his great discernment and intimate knowledge of the human countenance; for although General Washington has been extolled for his great moderation and calmness, during the very trying situations in which he has so often been placed, yet those who have been acquainted with him the longest and most intimately say, that he is by nature a man of a fierce and irritable disposition; but that, like Socrates, his judgment and great self-command have always made him appear a man of a different cast in the eyes of the world. He speaks with great diffidence, and sometimes hesitates for a word; but it is always to find one particularly well adapted to his meaning. His language is manly and expres-

sive. At levee, his discourse with strangers turns principally upon the subject of America; and if they have been through any remarkable places, his conversation is free and particularly interesting, as he is intimately acquainted with every part of the country. He is much more open and free in his behaviour at levee than in private, and in the company of ladies still more so than when solely with men.

General Washington gives no public dinners or other entertainments, except to those who are in diplomatic capacities, and to a few families on terms of intimacy with Mrs. Washington. Strangers, with whom he wishes to have some conversation about agriculture or any such subject, are sometimes invited to tea. This by many is attributed to his saving disposition; but it is more just to ascribe it to his prudence and foresight; for as the salary of the President, as I have before observed, is very small, and totally inadequate by itself to support an expensive style of life, were he to give numerous and splendid entertainments, the same might possibly be expected from subsequent Presidents, who, if their private fortunes were not considerable, would be unable to live in the same style, and might be exposed to many ill-natured observations, from the relinquishment of what the people had been accustomed to; it is most likely also that General Washington has been actuated by these motives, because in his private capacity at Mount Vernon every stranger meets with a hospitable reception from him.

General Washington's self-moderation is well known to the world already. It is a remarkable

circumstance, which redounds to his eternal honour, that while President of the United States, he never appointed one of his own relations to any office of trust or emolument, although he has several that are men of abilities, and well qualified to fill the most important stations in the government.

THE END.

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